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FROM STALINGRAD TO DAKAR

UNTIL the United Nations struck in Africa, Stalingrad had been for three months the focus of our hopes and fears. Again this week it has recalled our attention, for what is happening there may prove to be as decisive in the wider strategy of this war as any of the immense operations in which we are involved on the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. Once again, at the onset of winter, but very much earlier than last year, the Russians have passed from stubborn defensive tactics to a bold offensive on an imposing scale. Simultaneously from the North and South they have attacked the Germans behind Stalingrad and on both flanks they have achieved a break-through. The topography of their movements is not yet perfectly clear. What is abundantly clear is that their advance across the northern course of the Don above the bend on a wide front between Serafimovich and Kletskaya has driven the enemy's Rumanian divisions into a precipitate retreat southwards. The Russians then swung eastwards and are now occupying the right bank of the bend of the Don. The advance from the South-West has cut both the railway lines which supply the armies investing Stalingrad, and it would seem that the two advancing Russian armies are now only twenty miles apart. The bold movements have been so rapid and so successful that we are tempted to speculate on their possible consequences. They might compel the Germans to evacuate Stalingrad, while they have still a lane open for an orderly retreat. But, if on the other hand, the two Russian armies could effect a junction promptly in sufficient force, a great German army would be cut off in a very difficult and perilous position. We will not pitch our hopes too high, but some known facts justify an optimistic reading of this big event. The enemy is said to be ill-clad in bitter weather and to be surrendering easily. The total of 51,000 prisoners is unusual on this front, and probably a high proportion of them are Germans. The booty in vehicles and guns is also impressive. Finally, it is known that the *Luftwaffe* has been seriously depleted in order to carry on the struggle for the command of the Sicilian narrows. It is, of course, possible that the Germans may rally and restore one of their two lines of communications. Salients even more improbable than this have been held indefinitely on the Russian Front. But the chances are, we think, that the Germans will not be able to hold on to Stalingrad throughout the winter, and the longer they delay their retreat, the more disastrous is it likely to be.

The epic of Stalingrad has still to be concluded. If we guess aright, what began as a forlorn hope will end as a decisive victory. The German army has paid heavily for the egotism of the Führer. If his vanity should insist on maintaining a position which is now as useless as it is precarious, he may break the best fighting material he possesses. It is only now, in retrospect, that we can fully realise how seriously German plans in Russia have miscarried this year. We had supposed that the purpose of this campaign was primarily to deny to the Russians the use of the Volga highway, which would mean starving them of oil. This was for a short time achieved, or nearly so. But since the full text of Stalin's recent speech became available, it has been clear that his description of their further plans was not a guess. He read out the text of the Staff plans which fell into Russian hands, which made it clear that the capture of Stalingrad was meant to be only a stage in a vast turning movement, which should have swept up the Volga to Kuibishev. That city should have fallen long ago. This colossal enveloping drive would then have taken Moscow from the rear. Certainly the Germans made great gains—the minerals of the Donets, the grain of the Kuban plain and the oil of Maikop—and inflicted painful losses on the Russians. But what they achieved was a mere fraction of what they had planned. What in the end they have demonstrated is the unquenchable valour and resilience of the Red Army. With all their gains, the verdict on this German campaign is already "failure." We may soon dare to say of it that it was the beginning of the end.

In Africa, though the tendency of both campaigns is clearer, the big events lie still ahead. Can Rommel make a determined stand on the shores of Sirte at El Agheila, or will the Eighth Army sweep past it, and then with perilously lengthening communications, cross the desert into the colonised and settled area of Tripolitania? Before that question is answered, the First Army is likely to be heavily engaged in what is virtually a siege of Bizerta and Tunis. It will be, we should judge, an air battle even more than a land battle. The Germans will rely chiefly on their airfields across the ninety miles of sea in Sicily. The prize for which we are contending is neither Tunisia nor Tripolitania, but the secure use of the Sicilian narrows. Bizerta and Tripoli are the African keys to these waters. But we shall not command them securely until Sicily has been wrenched from the Axis.

Meanwhile, on the Atlantic coast Dakar, a great sea and air port, with its defences and its warships, has come over to the United Nations. In a military sense this is good news. Its capture, if it had continued to obey the Axis, might have been costly and difficult. Its gain should serve us well in the struggle against the submarine in the Atlantic. But the political aspects of this success only add to the embarrassment which Admiral Darlan's ambiguous stand already made for the United Nations. He is now in control of much the greater and richer part of the French Empire and he governs it from Algiers, a city of metropolitan France. Absurd though the fiction may be, he insists in repeated proclamations that he draws his authority from the senile prisoner of Vichy and rules by virtue of its sovereignty. In other words, these vast provinces have been won not for the Fourth Republic of to-morrow, but for the Fascist State which emerged from the collapse. How far he has yet conformed with President Roosevelt's "requests" we do not know. He has, indeed, with startling insolence proclaimed an "amnesty" for political offenders: the crime of ten thousand men and women of North Africa who struggled to restore French liberty will be pardoned. But it is not yet reported that the anti-semitic decrees of Vichy have been cancelled. Nor is the Foreign Office in answer to a question from Lord Strabolgi able as yet to assure us that the 15,000 Spanish Republican prisoners have been liberated or the 900 men of the International Brigade freed from the slavery to which they had been condemned. Until this happens, neither the French people nor our European allies will have much reason to

rejoice over our successes in Africa. Even then, they will have to face the bitter fact that the entire civil administration of North Africa, with all the means of political and economic pressure of a totalitarian machine, remains in Fascist hands. That is much more than a misfortune for Africa. It means that an army and a civil administration is being built up on French soil which may one day play a part in shaping the future of France itself. A precedent is being set, moreover, which may be repeated when our armies advance into Italy and Central Europe. Such short-term military advantages as this alliance with reaction may have brought us are outbalanced by the dismay and suspicions this performance has brought to all the friends of democracy in Europe. The way out of this scandalous situation is clear, and we trust that the Labour Party here and, we would add, the New Dealers in America, will press it as an urgent measure on their two Governments. We dare not delay much longer in helping the Fighting French to get together a representative body of republican civilians strong enough to be recognised as the provisional government of a France in process of liberation.

Changes in the Cabinet

We deal in an article in this issue with the departure of Sir Stafford Cripps from the War Cabinet. In the general reshuffle attention has naturally been concentrated upon him. But there are other points with regard to the changes which are of some importance. That Mr. Herbert Morrison should become a member of the War Cabinet is all to the good in the abstract, for there is no politician of the front rank whose mind and outlook are fundamentally as broad, sane and humane. But it is impossible to believe that he will be able to combine effectively the duties of his new post and those of Home Secretary. Membership of the War Cabinet is, or should be, a full-time job. The change of Colonel Oliver Stanley for Lord Cranborne as Colonial Secretary is deplorable. The future treatment and development of the colonies will be a test case of our sincerity. The Colonial Office should be in the hands of a first-class statesman, and he should be given a tenure sufficient to enable him to plan and initiate a policy. As it is, no sooner is a politician shuffled into the post than he is shuffled out of it. Colonel Stanley has given no proof that he is fit to be shuffled into it.

Regulation 33B

Sir Wilson Jameson, when he broadcast upon the wartime increase of venereal diseases and urged greater frankness and common sense in dealing with them, foreshadowed some Government action. But Regulation 33B, the Ministry of Health's measure, is rousing protests ranging from a deputation of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene and a "Prayer" by M.P.'s headed by Dr. Edith Summerskill to letters in the *Times*. The regulation, which provides that if two patients receiving treatment for venereal disease at a public clinic, under local government authorities, or by doctors in the Forces, inform that they have been infected by a single person, that "contact" may be compulsorily subjected to examination and treatment, is clearly a partial and *ad hoc* expedient. It omits all cases under private treatment. It proposes to furnish the contact, after treatment, with a clearance certificate that she is non-infectious, armed with which she may relapse or recontract disease and spread it without check till two more informers happen to make her condition known. The possibilities of bribery and of blackmail involved are obvious. This measure is aimed at rounding up certain prostitutes, some of them well known, who are at present communicating venereal diseases, especially to men in the Forces. It is they who are informed against now, in military hospitals; but there is no legal way of stopping their deadly commerce. Clearly it is not aimed at men, since it is almost impossible to imagine a case of two prostitutes who would know which particular man infected both of them. At most, it would act as a palliative, since even if some women are temporarily prevented from practising prostitution, others will continue to contract and spread infection. An effective method of checking venereal disease would be welcome and nobody would think the rights of women engaged in an anti-social trade should outweigh the lives of men. But a sufficient case for this regulation does not seem to have been made out.

No Plan for Planning

The planning impasse apparently continues unchanged. At all events, Lord Portal's speech in the House of Lords told the public nothing that it did not know already, and committed the Government to nothing it was not committed to long ago. The only definite promise—that local authorities will be allowed to acquire the entire areas needed for the redevelopment of blitzed cities—was made many months ago, after the Uthwatt Committee had produced its *interim* report. It does not carry us far without a complementary announcement of the Government's readiness to provide the financial assistance that will enable the local authorities to act on it. For the rest, Lord Portal talked only generalities, and there was a clear implication that the Government have not yet advanced one single step towards making up its mind. Indeed, it may even have gone back. In Lord Reith's days, the Government did positively commit itself to the establishment of a National Planning Authority. But we are left uncertain whether that promise holds good to-day—at any rate in the sense in which it was generally understood when it was made. There is now a tendency to treat "planning" as meaning merely town and country planning in the sense of the Town and Country Planning Act, or at most only planning of land-use. A year ago, most people regarded the Government as having promised a good deal more than this, even though the precise extent of its promises was uncertain. It may be that we are on the eve of the end of this havering; but it is pretty clear that behind the scenes a stiff opposition is being put up even to the essentially moderate proposals of the Uthwatt Report, and particularly to the proposal to buy the development rights in all undeveloped land by the method of global purchase. This clearly is the keypoint of the Uthwatt scheme: if it is rejected, there is almost nothing left. But the property-owning interests dislike it; and therefore it is denounced as a "controversial" project, which ought not to be brought in during this war.

Compromise or Inanition?

In the light of the deadlock over planning, Sir Stafford Cripps's recent speeches on reconstruction policy have a particularly ominous sound—the more ominous because he himself was clearly uncomfortable in making them. He tells us in one breath that democracy must not be stultified by its failure to achieve constructive measures, and in the next that controversial legislation is still to be ruled out. But what legislation of any importance can fail to be controversial when it is a question not of temporary wartime expedients, but of a basis for post-war reconstruction? Leaders of all parties have spoken gaily of the continuance of coalition for several years after the war. Do they really suppose that over such a period it will be possible to avoid controversial legislation? Such legislation may have to be based on compromises, in which one party yields on one point and another on another. No legislation of any value can be based on avoiding the issues on which the parties differ, because they differ about almost everything that needs to be done. Sir Stafford Cripps, of course, knows this perfectly well, and his speeches must be read as an injunction to all the main parties and interests to be ready to make compromises, in order that it may become possible to legislate on controversial questions. But we are unable to discern as yet any willingness, except on the Labour side, to compromise upon any of the fundamental issues of economic power; and there are even ominous premonitory rumblings of resistance to the still unpublished Beveridge Report. Indeed, resistance to economic change shows signs of stiffening rapidly as the confidence of victory increases, and the time for actual reconstruction looks like drawing near. Something, however, must be done speedily; for even the Tories realise the danger of having nothing ready against the end of the war. So we shall get a decision soon, at any rate about Uthwatt; but, in the light of the Cripps–Portal speeches, is it likely to be a decision that will provide any satisfactory basis for reconstruction? We greatly fear not.

Mr. Bevin's Test Case

It is rumoured that Mr. Bevin is being compelled to drop his Bill for the regulation of conditions in the catering trades, on the ground that the matter is too controversial to be dealt with during the war. Heavens alive! If this Bill, which simply does for an additional trade, and one sadly in need of regulation, what has been done for dozens of others already, is too controversial, what are we to expect when major problems come to be tackled, as tackled they must be very soon? The opposition to Mr. Bevin's Bill is purely and simply a sectional opposition, grounded in vested interest; it has nothing national about it. If every vested interest is to have a tribune's free veto on any legislation that may be proposed, nothing can ever get done. Mr. Bevin has more than once proclaimed his intention of pushing the Bill through, whatever the caterers and their Parliamentary backers may say. If he now gives way, what inference is the public to draw, except that reaction claims a right to veto all legislation that is not to its taste, and that even so forcible a person as the Minister of Labour has no power to stand out against this nihilism? Even the leaders of big business, in their manifesto on which we commented last week, appeared to recognise that a minimum wage and fair labour conditions must be made first charges on the product of industry. The catering trades seemingly regard themselves as entitled to claim exemption from the general rule solely by virtue of the effectiveness of their Parliamentary lobby. We earnestly hope that Mr. Bevin will not give way to them, and that, on the contrary, he will press on with the extension of the fair wages principle in defiance of all the vested interests which seek to veto reform in the name of "national unity." For the moment, the eyes of the people may be on North Africa, and not on Great Britain. But that mood will not last; nor could the veto of the interests be effective even now if the Labour Members of the Government would but pull sensibly together and co-operate with the Labour Party in Parliament instead of sitting on its head.

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TAILS UP, THE TORIES!

THE changes in the Cabinet are a symptom of renascent Toryism. The key to their explanation is the departure of Sir Stafford Cripps from the War Cabinet to a post in which, whatever its importance, he can have no influence upon the Government's policy in general and upon its policy of post-war planning in particular. His political career, when he joined Mr. Churchill's Government, had given him the deserved reputation of unusual sincerity and independence and of being a man of very progressive, if not revolutionary, views. At the time many people thought that his influence for good would have been greater if he had retained his independence as a benevolent neutral outside the Government, for within it he might find his hands and tongue tied by Toryism, for in the existing House of Commons the Coalition Government is necessarily and heavily weighted on the side of conservatism. In the interval there have several times been rumours of disagreement between him and the Prime Minister and of his approaching departure. Now he has departed, but not into independence. It is significant that his last action before leaving the War Cabinet was a statement on the necessity to prepare by legislation for post-war reconstruction and that several Tory M.P.s showed that they did not agree with him. He is now transferred by the Prime Minister to a post in which his activities will be safely confined to aircraft production. It is true that his place in the War Cabinet is taken by Mr. Morrison, but the Home Secretary is a minister whose time is fully occupied with the business of his department. The War Cabinet is therefore weakened as an instrument both for directing the general strategy of war and for planning the strategy of peace.

The events immediately preceding Sir Stafford's change of status deserve attention. They began last week in the House of Commons with an incident which, arising out of a motion concerning the future business of the House, escaped the notice of most people, but had further repercussions. Tory Members were up in arms because they saw danger to the *status quo* in some words of Sir Stafford Cripps. As Sir Douglas Hacking put it, the Government seemed to have altered their previous pledge "to introduce no legislation unless in exceptional cases and with general agreement" into a new pledge "to introduce legislation if there is general agreement." It is characteristic of a large section of the Tory Party in the present House that they scented danger to the *status quo* and to the sacred egoism of Tory capitalism in this tentative suggestion by the Government that it might be advisable to make some changes in this best of all Tory worlds, if the Tories and everyone else agreed to them. For the whiff of revolution which Sir Douglas scented in the statement of that reformed revolutionary, the Lord Privy Seal was the suspicion that the legislation referred to would be concerned, not with the war, but with preparing for post-war reconstruction. These Die Hards are determined that a Coalition Government and party truce shall ensure that we and, above all, our vested interests shall not only remain in the delightful world of 1939, unchanged and uncontaminated, but shall also be unable to change or contaminate it.

This is only one sign of a marked revival in the spirit of Tory reaction. In the days of national danger and military defeat Toryism goes to ground and we are all promised a new world if we do our duty and win the war, but as soon as victory appears on the horizon, it is always again: "Tails up, the Tories!" In the last war, as long as victory was in doubt, they promised us an England fit for heroes to live in and a world protected from war by a League of Nations; as soon as peace came, they destroyed all the "controls" which alone might have enabled us to lay the foundations of a new Britain and they destroyed the League which alone might have saved us from another war. It was international conservatism and capitalism which, by resisting all economic or international change, gave us the locust years of the hungry twenties and rebuilt the slum world which was fit not for heroes, but Hitlers. The same thing is already beginning to-day and in the House of Commons, in Congress, and in all those places where behind the scenes the powerful tamper and tinker with the wheels of power you may watch the vested interests staking out their claims and putting up the barricades against change which they always call "revolution." In the honeymoon days of doubt and danger earlier in the war all the old promises were trotted out and we were even assured that an Act had been passed which ensured that property and industry would be controlled by the nation for the nation and that a great social and economic revolution had been carried out in 24 hours. It turned out that, as, with most English revolutions, nothing revolved but the old persons and the old interests in the old places. Nothing was to be changed except that what we used to call a capitalist we were now to call a Controller. Nevertheless, as long as Britain remained in deadly peril, the voice of Toryism was silent or if heard was apologetic and pianissimo.

With the first gleam of victory all this has changed and Toryism will soon be in full cry. The signs are many. When the Parliamentary Labour Party put forward Mr. Parker as the Labour Member to move the Address, he was vetoed by the Conservative Party because he was a Socialist—and the Labour Party tamely submitted and substituted Mr. Walkden! On the other side, a Conservative Member of the Government, Lord Croft—it is true, "a mental mediocrity," as one M.P. described him, but still a Junior Minister—is allowed to say that there is no need for a new order after the war. It is the little straws which show which way the wind is setting. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister encourages the little Tory straws. An example of this was his remarks about the Empire at the Guildhall. We are not among those who would welcome the disruption of the Empire. It is not the break up of nations and peoples, but their bringing together in larger international combinations, like the Empire, which the world needs. On the other hand, to keep the old Empire just as it was in the days of Joseph Chamberlain, which is the Tory day dream, would be disastrous, even if possible. We can only serve ourselves and the world by converting the whole Empire into a real Commonwealth of Nations and making it part of a larger international organisation. What was deplorable about Mr. Churchill's statement was that it completely ignored this latter side of the picture and any obligations to subject peoples, to the world outside the Empire, or to the future. It was mere encouragement to the Tory imperialist Diehard, a blank "What we have we hold."

It is, however, on the question referred to at the beginning of this article that the Tory revival is most insistent and most dangerous. If we do not begin now to lay the legislative and administrative foundations of the new world which is to follow the war, we shall find ourselves at best in the pre-war chaos or more probably in something even worse. In education, in the replanning of towns and country, in the planning of industry both for national, and international purposes, unless the Government begins to act now, it will be too late for anything but drift and muddled improvisation when peace comes. On every subject the Government, yielding to the pressure of the Conservative vested interests, remains dilatory, hesitant, evasive, and inactive. Across the path of education standt he vested interests of the religious bodies; private property owners and the great vested interests prevent any decision upon the Uthwatt and Scott reports; the Conservative machine, worked by the large capitalists and financiers, vetos any decision which would prepare for international economic reconstruction in Europe. That is why renascent Toryism in the House of Commons is so menacing. As we have pointed out before, a Coalition Government heavily weights the scales on the side of conservatism. If the principle upon which it is to work is to be no legislation unless there is general agreement, then all the cards and all the power are in the hands of the Tories. Unless they agree to changes, there can be no change of any kind and not even preparation for change. The Tory Members, who form an overwhelming majority of the present House, are Neville Chamberlain's Old Guard, and most of them probably agree with Lord Croft that we do not want anything new after the war. In the shadow and chill of defeat their Toryism wilted a little; but it will become more and more active and insistent with every victory. Their obstruction, which, if successful, will make peace a disaster, can only be broken in one of two ways: by the Prime Minister or by a determined revolt of the Labour Party. Unfortunately, Mr. Churchill seems to have decided to be in domestic affairs a Tory Prime Minister. The future will, therefore, largely depend upon the courage and determination of the Labour Party.

NEW MEN FOR A NEW EUROPE

THE successful developments of the war along the North African coast have focussed our attention once more on the Mediterranean. These first moves in what is evidently an extensive plan to recapture control of the whole area from the Axis Powers stimulate conjecture in many directions, and in particular on the possibility of Allied landings on the southern shores of Europe in the not too distant future. For many months now we have given little thought to the future of the countries bordering on the Aegean and the Adriatic, but as the long-cherished hope of our re-intervention begins to assume concrete outlines it would be wise for us to consider what plans we have both in the political and the military sphere.

A victorious expedition on the part of the United Nations will sweep the shoddy façade of the "New Order" away with the retreating Axis armies, and it would indeed be lamentable if we had nothing to put in its place. One thing at least the "New Order" has done: it has made impossible a return to the old order as it stood in all its confusion before 1940. It will be our business to offer something more than a series of *ad hoc* improvisations in frontiers and governments. This will not merely be a matter of sound self-interest. The peoples of the Balkans will look to us to give them peace and constructive hope for the future, because we alone will have the power to do so. We shall want each country to find itself, as quickly as possible, but it will be for us not only to shape the larger framework of international organisation and back it with our guns, our brains and our money, but also to decide what leaders we are going to support in the first critical phase of revival.

To suggest that we should look above all for younger men implies no slight on the capable and self-sacrificing men of an older generation who are already working with the Allied Governments in our midst. There are many notable figures among them who are held in high estimation by their own peoples in occupied Europe, and it is a great advantage to our arms that they should be with us. But we need to find, to stand at their side, men who know, and are in sympathy with what the young soldiers of to-day and their wives are thinking, men who understand the modern world in its economic structure and spiritual cravings. The Balkans before the war presented a sorry picture of petty antagonistic interests and artificially inflated jealousies. It is essential that we should give our support only to men with minds above the old squabbles, who can gather all the progressive forces in their homelands together under one banner, and build the future with them on a recognition of the best in the past. They may appear hard to discover, but it is out of the stress and suffering of such times as Europe is now living through that men of new vision and purpose emerge.

One remarkable representative of the younger generation among our Allies was recently over here on a brief visit from Cairo. It is, one cannot

help feeling, a good omen for the future that this man, who deeply impressed all who came into contact with him, should now be Vice-Premier and Minister of War in the Greek Government, for Greece not only is closest to us of all Balkan countries, both by maritime sentiment and historical inspiration, but is also clearly marked out to play an extremely important part by our side in the Mediterranean structure, based on air-sea power, which will follow victory.

The personality and career of Panayotis Canellopoulos are both striking. He is only forty. He is a poet and philosopher as well as a political leader, a man of European culture and vision. He started his public life as a lecturer in Sociology in the University of Athens, and his brilliant success there brought him in the space of a few years the secretary-generalship of the Ministry of Education. In 1935, just after he had become Professor of Sociology, he gave up his academic and official life to enter politics. He was only thirty-three at the time, but it is clear that he was already certain of himself and believed he had an important task to fulfil. The way in which his lectures and his books were received had shown him that he had captured the imagination of the younger generation in Greece. They had responded to what was already his guiding and passionate conviction, that his country needed a unity and a regeneration that would never come through the old parties and personalities, and the veiled pro-Fascist course the Government was steering. To meet him to-day and to talk with him, even if only for a few hours, is to recognise at once this quality of intense spiritual conviction and integrity. General Metaxas paid him the compliment of recognising it, too, and very soon after he had founded his party of National Unity exiled him as a dangerous opponent to the islands. That exile lasted four years, and he occupied it by writing a large number of poems and a play, and in completing a remarkable philosophical *History of the European Mind*. The reference books for this work—English, French and German—were sent out to him by friends on the mainland. When the war with Italy broke out in 1940 he announced to the Government that he was returning, as his duty to Greece came before everything else, and insisted on joining up as a private soldier. After Germany entered the war and organised resistance collapsed, he returned to Athens and began to work in secret against the occupation. It is only a few months since he made his dramatic escape in a rowing boat, just before the Gestapo caught up on him, and arriving in Cairo was immediately made Vice-Premier by the King with the full approval of our authorities. There can be few cases in modern history of a private soldier—and a private who was also a learned philosopher and distinguished poet—reaching such high office in so short a space of time.

Panayotis Canellopoulos is an admirer of British civilisation, but he also understands its relation to the rest of European civilisation. He is a believer in the free political institutions of the West, but has the greatest respect for modern Russia and has made a more profound study of its doctrinal basis than many of the more vocal among that country's ideologists. It is to men of such intellectual accomplishment and single-minded vision that the new post-war Europe will surely look. Are there signs of other such men emerging among the rest of our smaller Allies and the Balkan and Danubian peoples for whom the United Nations will have for some time after the victory to remain trustees? One looks with hope towards the brave guerilla leaders operating in the highlands of Serbia and Montenegro against great odds. Yugoslavia, like Greece, will, with her long seaboard also have a vital part to play in the Mediterranean politics of the future, but unless we have a plan to associate the neighbours of these two countries with them in some kind of over-riding unity, and unless we are already searching under the darkness of Nazi domination for new leaders to co-operate in such a system, we may find our edifice of peace lacking in the essential bricks and mortar when the crucial moment for decisions has arrived.

SS

"Wenn alle untreu werden,
So bleiben wir doch treu."

"IF all the world breaks faith, we shall be faithful still." Thus begins the song of the SS—a poem written early in the nineteenth century by the Catholic romantic Max von Schenkendorf, which must be sung, by order of Hitler, at the end of every SS meeting.

It is all by order of Hitler: the black uniforms; the belt inscribed with the motto "loyalty is my honour"; the rule that SS men must never take part in discussions at party meetings. For this élite of the party is the personal creation of the Führer—more than anything else in Germany. It has been planned and organised as his personal bodyguard, his personal intelligence service inside the party, even his personal advertising agency.

That role of the SS has grown out of the history of the Nazi party which was founded in 1919, broke down and was revived in 1925. The first NSDAP was the creation of the military in its early attempts to circumvent the disarmament conditions by means of a secret volunteer army; the second was for many years cold-shouldered by the consolidated professional army, but made an early and successful bid for the financial support of the big industrialists.

The SA was the child of the first period; the SS is the product of the second. The Free Corps officers who led the SA could never rid themselves of their military ambitions; both Roehm and Pfeffer frankly disobeyed Hitler when he tried to turn the SA into a purely political army. For all that, the outlet offered by the SA to all who wanted to turn their discontent into violent action was very useful to Hitler during the years of the world crisis. But its very spontaneity and vague social radicalism made it unfit to be an instrument for Fascist power. When its leaders demanded incorporation into the army on equal terms, Hitler decided to decapitate the SA. Since then it has been transformed into a non-political, semi-compulsory organisation for pre- and post-military training.

The SS, on the other hand, was founded in 1925 by the mature Hitler, the author of *Mein Kampf*, who had meditated the causes of his first defeat in the quiet of Landsberg. It was this Hitler who had just staged the second foundation of the party in order to establish his unconditional authority, and had turned the *Völkischer Beobachter* into his private property; who was about to declare the party's programme as unalterable and to make the original Munich group the only statutory body of the party. Above all, it was the Hitler who had determined to liquidate the social radicalism of Gregor Strasser's North German organisation, in order to establish contact with Big Business.

Consequently, the SS was founded on three principles: the personal oath of loyalty to the Führer, military discipline applied to purely political tasks, and social selection of membership. Apart from bodyguard and spying duties, the activities of the SS were to consist mainly in the recruiting of party members and of subscribers and advertisers for Hitler's paper. To compensate them for so prosaic a service, they were given charge of the blood banner of November 9th and imbued with the feeling of being the party's élite, the selected few, strictly separated from the vulgar mass. And, indeed, they were selected at least in one respect: There were no proletarians in the SS.

The first leaders of the new organisation do not seem to have been successful. In 1928, however, Heinrich Himmler took over, and with him there came into leading positions Daluege, to-day head of the German uniformed police, and Sepp Dietrich, who later formed the Armed SS. In 1931, a former naval intelligence officer undertook to organise a special spying department, then innocuously called PI—"Press Information." His name was Heydrich. In the same year the SS passed its first severe test of loyalty: it had to defend the Berlin Gau office of the party against mutinous SA—with the help of the police! But their really great time began only after the conquest of power.

As soon as the Nazis entered the various German state governments in 1933 they at once took charge of all the police ministries. From these strategic positions they enlisted their own formations as emergency police and started their reign of terror. They decided to organise special fully-militarised units of the SS; some of them, based on Hitler's original bodyguard under Sepp Dietrich, were to be garrisoned in key-towns, while others were to be entrusted with the special terror duties of guarding the concentration camps. At the same time, Himmler and his assistant Heydrich were charged with reorganising the entire police, first of Bavaria and later of all Germany except Prussia; and Daluege joined the Prussian Ministry of the Interior in order to reorganise the Prussian uniformed police.

This meant that the newly formed Gestapo was recuited entirely from the ranks of the SS under Himmler's direction. A few weeks before June 30th, 1934, Himmler and Heydrich moved into the Prinz Albrecht Strasse, the headquarters of the Berlin Gestapo; at the same time the SS spying department built up by Heydrich, now called the Security Service, was officially given the monopoly of all party intelligence work and attached to the Gestapo. Their labours bore fruit in the notorious blood purge, but the actual execution, in every sense of the word, was left to Sepp Dietrich's bodyguards. The Armed SS, to-day the rulers of Occupied Europe, went first into action on that 30th of June; and Sepp Dietrich was promoted Obergruppenführer—the equivalent of full general—for these murders.

From that day the consolidation of the new regime proceeded quickly and smoothly. When conscription was introduced in 1935, the Reichswehr consented to armed service with the S.S. as an alternative. By 1936 the reorganisation of the German police was finished. Himmler became Reich Leader of the SS and Police, with Daluege as chief of the uniformed police and Heydrich as chief of the "Security Police" under him—the latter comprising C.I.D., Gestapo and SS Security Service. The SS had completely absorbed the key department of internal state power. When war broke out, SS and police chiefs with special powers were appointed, after a long-prepared plan, for every military district, and later for most of the occupied countries. At the same time the Armed SS was unified by military service "for the duration."

The physical terror practised by the SS police is supplemented by the moral terrorism of the SS weekly, *Das Schwarze Korps*. In the provincial *Völkischer Beobachter* you can still recognise the language of the old mass party, with its "human dust" of ideological cranks, excited philistines and sentimental spinsters. The SS paper is a policy forming organ: it makes rulings on political issues ahead of administrative action. In it there is nothing but the cold and ruthless *raison d'état* of the Nazi régime, the Weltanschauung of the new State party of determined gangsters without ideological ballast. Here, every sentimental Nazi phrase is cynically reduced to its practical meaning in power politics, no matter whether this contradicts the general line of mass propaganda. Alone among the Nazi press, the *Schwarze Korps* is consistently frank: It can afford it.

Ever since 1933 all the leaders and organisations of the Nazi party have been working hard to subordinate every sphere of state and society to the party machine. In this struggle they all had to define their attitude to the traditional leading groups of German society—the army, the bureaucracy, the Churches and Big Business. Darré and Göring, Reichenau and Ribbentrop have wrestled with the problem in their different ways; but the most successful as well as the truly classical method has been worked out by the SS. It has kept aloof from the army, while building up a political army of its own; it has fought the old bureaucracy and

replaced it step by step; it has consistently affirmed that for the Nazi state no real peace, but only a truce, is possible with the Churches. It has allied itself with Big Business, and tends to merge with its leading personnel. That this policy accords equally closely with the SS tradition and needs of the situation explains its consistent success.

The army policy of the SS triumphed last winter with the attainment of equal status for the Armed SS, while Reichenau's attempt to politicise the regular army ended with his death. The anti-Christian policy of the SS, due in no way to Wotan-worship, but only to state-worship, is to-day official policy. But the most striking peculiarity of the SS method is the combination of an anti-bureaucratic with a pro-capitalist policy.

The SS made its first big bid for economic power during the crisis preceding February 4th, 1938, when the resignations of Neurath, Frith and Schacht cleared the way for the beginning of open aggression. Until then, Darré's Reich Food Estate had been the only economic domain of the party, while Göring's general control of the four-year plan depended for its execution on professional bureaucrats. Now the SS demanded and got the Ministry of Economics for its own candidate—Funk. But the success seemed small compared to the other changes. For all the important departments of Funk's ministry went to the economic experts of the Army.

Left with so little executive power, Funk concentrated on one special task: to integrate the capitalists and their associations into the new planning structure. Leading capitalists have been introduced into the planning machine, and reliable Nazis into boards of big companies: their mutual absorption forming an osmotic process. Early this year, Funk's efforts achieved their final consummation. All the chambers of industry and commerce were reorganised and placed under the Party's Gau Economic Advisers—all of which are now either Nazis turned capitalists or capitalists turned Nazis, the most famous one being SS Oberführer Schröder, the Cologne banker who brought Hitler and Papen together early in 1933. Then, amidst a spate of press abuse against the bureaucrats, Reich corporations of private capitalist firms were formed for the most important branches of industry and invested with public authority.

While SS industrialists are thus taking charge of economic planning, and, incidentally, extending their private domains all over the continent, Gauleiter SS Gruppenführer Sauckel is mobilising European labour for the Nazi war machine; the successor of Hess, SS Obergruppenführer Bormann, is purging the civil service and fighting the Churches; the new Reich Minister of Justice, SS Oberführer Thierack, is purging the judiciary and ordering the judges to exchange their information regularly with the SS Security Service; and Armed SS and Gestapo rule supreme in Occupied Europe. The strain of war has brought the innermost tendencies of the Nazi system to the surface; and these innermost tendencies are embodied in Hitler's most personal creation—the SS.

PAUL SERING

A LONDON DIARY

In the next few weeks a good deal of the next generation's future will be decided. The debate on the Labour Amendment to the Address, which Mr. Greenwood is to move, and the reception of the Beveridge Report, will tell us a good deal about the degree to which the vested interests of this country have learned something from the war. The manœuvres for position that are taking place are on the grand scale; and I am told that the publicity experts of big business are working overtime. I thought Sir William Beveridge put his finger on the central problem in his Fabian lecture last Saturday when he said that it will be a major contribution to the war effort to relieve people of anxiety about post-war security. That is the thing that Mr. Attlee and Mr. Bevin have got to drive home to that curious combination of the Elizabethan adventurer and the eighteenth century Whig aristocrat who is our Prime Minister. I hope they will succeed. What I fear is the rear-guard actions the vested interests will fight on behalf of delay. Time and fatigue, now, as always, are the main allies of malignant reaction.

* * *

It is always difficult to interpret a statesman's meaning; Mr. Gladstone once told Lord Morley that, after sixty years in Parliament, politicians remained to him the most mysterious of human beings. I find Sir Stafford Cripps increasingly hard to understand. When he speaks with the Church or to youth, he is bold, adventurous, permeated with his own sense of the need for urgency. When he speaks as leader of the House, one seems to listen to a different person. The plea that the slow-minded should adjust the pace of their thinking and that the radicals should ask for less sounded grimly like a plea for permanent coalition. I know nothing more likely to lead us to destruction. There are no common terms of thought between men of the outlook of Lord Croft in the Tory party and a representative Labour member like Ellis Smith. If you try to act on the G.C.M. of their authentic philosophies what you do is to keep the Viscount Simons of this world permanently in office. I do not think Sir Stafford would find that result very satisfactory. You do not face problems by entrusting their solution to the men who have spent their lives in evading them. It is a sound instinct which has made the British people suspicious and resentful of coalitions. They may give you a Churchill at the top; but the departments swarm with Tadpoles and Tapers underneath.

* * *

The Darlan episode still leaves a nasty taste in the mouths of most decent people. What is disturbing in it is the fact that it so easily becomes an element in a pattern in the weaving of which both the Foreign Office and the State Department are past masters. Sir Samuel Hoare continues his mysterious flirtation with that "great Christian gentleman," General Franco. There are curious tales of a tenderness among our diplomats for Marshal Badoglio and that Hungarian aristocracy which has played the jackal to Hitler ever since he came to power. It would not surprise me, when the real crisis comes in Germany, to see London and Washington promoting the attractions of Schacht and Bruening as the fit inheritors of authority in Berlin. The time for men who realise the depth of the changes this age requires is now. The "century of the common people" may discover that its organisation has been entrusted, over half the world, to the men who made possible the epoch of Hitler and Mussolini. That would suit big business, both here and in America, down to the ground. It would leave them in control of the masses. The one thing they fear is a determination in the masses to charge themselves with their own destiny.

* * *

My plea the other week that Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* should be reprinted has brought me a number of letters of warm approval. I noticed with pleasure that at the P.E.N. Conference last week-end, the eminent critic, Mr. Herbert Read, urged the establishment of an international fund for translations. I think he has put his finger on a need that has been long overdue. We know very little, fiction apart, of post 1914 Soviet literature; yet their historians, for example, have published massive inquiries into our land-tenure and the democratic movements of the seventeenth century. Even some of the great foreign names are unavailable in English—Vico, for example, and Meinecke, who has written at least two books which are indispensable to the understanding of modern Germany. Kant's treatise on the philosophy of law is an out of print and scarce little volume. Yet it had immense influence on our continental jurisprudence. And I think I am right in saying that none of the works of Hans Kelsen, perhaps the outstanding legal thinker in the world to-day, is available in an English translation.

Mr. Read's remark set me on another track, the journey over which still awaits its explorer—I mean foreign opinion of Britain in the last hundred years or so. In 1834 Tocqueville, for instance, met Nassau Senior, and a close friendship developed between them. Senior's habit of keeping a journal of their conversation led to the publication of two volumes in 1872. It is not easy to exaggerate either their interest for the general reader or their importance for the historian. Tocqueville's superb insight enabled him to see things in this country quite hidden even from so competent an observer as Senior. The latter, for instance, criticised Tocqueville's remark, in his *Democracy in America* that in English legislation "le bien du pauvre had in the end been sacrificed to that of the rich" by pointing out that English wages were higher than French wages; Tocqueville's reply seems to me a comment on the comparative history of the two countries in the whole nineteenth century. "You give to the expression le bien du pauvre a confined sense which was not mine; you translate it wealth, a word expecially applied to money. I meant by it all that contributes to happiness—personal consideration, political right, easy justice, intellectual enjoyments, and many other sources of contentment. I shall believe, till I have proof to the contrary, that in England the rich have gradually monopolised almost all the advantages that society bestows upon mankind." And in the second volume, there is a letter, written just after the Crimean war, which is as remarkable a prophecy of the problems we confront to-day as I have seen in many years. It predicts the inevitability of conscription; and it insists that within fifty years the policy of "splendid isolation" will have ceased to have meaning. At that point, says Tocqueville, we shall have to renounce the foundations of our institutions. But no summary can do justice to these remarkable volumes. I add that they are out of copyright and that they would make one moderate sized volume in the world's classics.

* * *

Now that Mrs. Roosevelt is back in her own country, there is one aspect of her visit to which I want to pay tribute. Not only was she eager to know all that she could find out here of the attitude of youth to contemporary problems; she was even more anxious to know of young American men and women capable of leadership in the next generation. She had no desire more keen than that they should have their chance. She spoke of promising students in American universities with a detailed knowledge that was as surprising as it was exhilarating. She was even remarkably aware of the teachers who exercised an influence. It was obviously a great source of pleasure to her that the President had named Felix Frankfurter to the Supreme Court; but she was obviously concerned that no professor of law had the magical hold he used to exercise on the students of the Harvard Law School. Mrs. Roosevelt has a sense of the realities in battle in this war which it would be insolent to try to praise. And I have met no one who understands better than she does the price we shall pay if, at its end, we have failed to provide the younger generation with a faith worth living for. She is a great person, in her own right. America ought to be very proud of her.

* * *

An illness in my family this last week means the necessity of two nurses in the house, and I had the chance to talk with them about conditions in their profession. Their picture made me more than understand the shortage of nurses. The pay is too low; the hours are too long; in many of the institutions, public, and especially private, the discipline is impossibly rigid. I wish Mr. Bevin would look into the nursing profession from the angle of its future labour-supply. I should like to see the whole thing taken over by the local authorities. There ought to be fixed an uniform scale, with regular increments on salary, and the organisation of "refresher" courses, with proper avenues for promotion, and the chance, in the exceptional case, of scholarships which would give access to medical training. No

doubt domestic service remains the most sweated industry in Britain, apart from the life of the working woman housewife with three or four young children to look after. But I suspect that the nursing profession must run it pretty close. Compare the quality and quantity of a nurse's work and its reward with the salary of a Governor of the B.B.C. and ours remains a curiously topsy-turvy society.

* * *

Events in North Africa have brought a real improvement in Anglo-Soviet relations; that is clear not merely from Stalin's speech, but from the space given to the campaign in the Russian press. But when are we going to get down to the job of seriously building permanent bridges between the Russian people and ourselves? Is there to be an interchange, for instance, of students and teachers between the two countries? Are we going to take steps to make the understanding of the Russian experiment an integral part of the teaching of the social sciences in our universities? Are the Colonial Office and the Home Office preparing to assimilate the important lessons the Russians have to teach in the education of backward peoples and the revision of our penal system? I know that it will not be easy to build these bridges; twenty-five years of isolation have bred their inevitable suspicions. But the best way to get them built is to be ready with our plans. The very fact that we make the effort is itself important.

* * *

Mr. Amery replied to the Union of Democratic Control that he saw no point in a visit from Mr. Rajagopalachari to this country. I am afraid that I am driven reluctantly to conclude that the outstanding motive in the Government's Indian policy is to maintain British prestige at all costs. I even suspect that Mr. Amery is not unduly disturbed by the fact that his wooden obstinacy prevents the discussions which must necessarily precede that argument between Indian parties for which the Government stipulates. We have reached a stage in India where we have not a friend left except the "official" Indians whom we have ourselves elevated to high place. Evidently the progressive members of the Cabinet exhausted their energy with the Cripps offer. Perhaps that is why Mr. Churchill feels able to lapse back into the language one might have expected from Lord Clive.

HAROLD J. LASKI

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Mrs. Binford Hole.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

There is a school for jungle warfare in India where the only text-book used is a thin volume of Kipling's poems. An instructor at the school maintains that Kipling has the complete answer to almost every problem likely to be encountered during jungle operations.

"And," he adds, "a couplet on forays from Kipling can always be remembered, which is more than can be said for a military manual."—The *Times*.

That combined air, sea, and land power can win a war if so organised and marshalled as to be superior at the decisive point, is a certainty which has never been doubted by anyone.—*Observer*.

Only three days ago I recommended a great friend of mine to take —— tablets, because he was suffering from very bad headaches. This friend is a French soldier. He came to me, and this is what he said.

"With the splendid spirit of the people here, England simply can't lose the war. Of this I'm firmly convinced, if all the people who suffer from headaches and loss of sleep take —— tablets."—Advt. in *Daily Sketch*.

THE FIRST FREEDOM

"They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live."—*Atlantic Charter*.

If Spain, involved in general peace
And acting as a free community,
Votes for the permanent increase
Of nation-wide Falangist unity,
And registers unfeigned content
With Franco's People's Government,

If Austrians with a single voice
Expressive of their ancient loyalty,
Elect by free, impulsive choice,
Some ex-Imperial Hapsburg royalty,
While free Hungarians record
They wish the Monarchy restored,

If France, released from armed control,
Abjures her national estrangement,
If Pétain, Weygand and de Gaulle
Come to a tripartite arrangement
That France may freely organise
A Free-French-Fascist compromise,

If Germany and Italy,
Reintroduced to ballot boxes,
Declare in fullest liberty
For ideologic orthodoxies,
And, weaned from militarist mood,
May vote to end the vote for good,

If Balkan States, immune from threats,
Pass a spontaneous resolution,
Not for the rule of soviets,
But for a liberal constitution,
Then, truly, the Atlantic Charter
Will be free Europe's Magna Charta.

If not, the world will be perplexed
About just what will happen next.

SAGITTARIUS

THE CONDITION OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

"We had another brilliant evening; the heavy table jumped about in the locked cage; the hand-bell was picked up and waved in the air; the musical-box (in the cage) played and stopped to order and wound itself up at the same time as it played; loud raps were heard on the table in the cage; a hand-like form or pseudopod waved to us from cabinet opening; handkerchief on floor was twice picked up; a small table was picked up and waved; luminous bracelet was picked up several times and thrown at sitters; we held up a luminous plaque, and received soft thuds or taps on it; there was a gentle tug-of-war between a sitter and a pseudopod, each holding an end of a handkerchief; then this pseudopod or black stump silhouetted itself against the luminous plaque; finally there was a struggle between the "force" pseudopod and two sitters, who attempted to retain a small table in their grasp. In the scrimmage the table was broken.*

And therefore?

Therefore the soul exists independently of the flesh, survives bodily death, and proceeds to mess about with tables and handkerchiefs, in order to assure us that it does so. No, obviously not; whatever else follows, *that* does not. God may exist or He may not; the human soul may be immortal or it may not; He may wish us to know the fact or He may not. But that He should permit us neither to know nor not to know, but intermittently to suspect on the evidence of jumping tables and waving handkerchiefs doubtfully discerned in the red light of the séance room, that No Man's Land between science, psychology, conjuring and charlatanry—that I find frankly unbelievable.

"Anna then said that I was married and had no family."

(Anna is a Silesian peasant girl aged twelve; she can neither speak nor understand English; she has never heard of Mr. Price and did not know that she was going to meet him.)

Then she informed me that when I was a young boy I had fallen down and broken my left arm. At the same time she placed her finger on her own arm on the spot exactly corresponding to where the fracture had occurred in mine. Then I was told that, as a schoolboy, I had "had a shock on a boat." I now broke silence and asked Dr. Zoltowski whether Anna meant I had had an accident on a boat. Anna said: "No, not an accident, but a shock." For a few moments I was at a loss to know what she meant, and then I suddenly remembered the incident on the longboat. At the time this was a real shock to me, as I escaped serious injury—or worse—by a fraction of a second.

The child continued her "impressions" concerning me and mine, some too intimate to be recorded here, but every one of them true.*

And therefore?

Therefore there is a spirit land where divested of the flesh we become better and wiser, develop a propensity for talking ethico-religious uplift, and an interest in exploring and revealing past and future trivialities in the experiences of persons whom, when alive, we did not know. Again, I think, obviously not. Apart from the *non sequitur* again involved, the implication, for me at least, is altogether too gloomy. Most spirit messages are definitely of a lower intellectual content than most ordinary conversations between ordinary people, suggesting that whether or no ghosts have souls, they certainly have no brains. Now, the view that we survive, but survive clouded or diminished in respect of that reason which Aristotle held to be the distinguishing characteristic of our species, I find intolerable. It was apparently the traditional view of the ancient world (see in this connection an illuminating essay by Aldous Huxley, entitled *Squeak and Gibber*), but, although a certain amount of empirical evidence points that way, it is not of the kind afforded by the apparent enlargement of faculty in the Silesian peasant girl.

I have selected from the wealth of abnormal happenings recorded in Mr. Price's book a typical set of abnormal physical and another of abnormal psychical phenomena. The first set of phenomena suggests that there are occurrences to which the laws of physics do not apply. They suggest, for example, action from a distance; they suggest that movements of matter take place which are not caused by preceding movements of matter, but are conceivably caused by the action of a volitional intelligence which is neither normal nor understood. (The point of the "neither/nor" is that, while none of the effects produced by a volitional intelligence upon matter are understood, those of them which are produced by a mind upon the body which it animates may be called normal. When the effects are produced by a mind upon a handkerchief, one calls them abnormal.)

The second set suggests that minds have powers with which they are not normally credited; the power, for example, to be aware of thoughts taking place in other minds otherwise than by inference from the observation of events occurring in the larynxes and of movements of the limbs which the "other mind" would normally be said to animate; it suggests, too, that they can be aware of events occurring in distant regions of space and time otherwise than through the report of those who have seen or heard and subsequently recorded them.

The investigation of these powers is of the highest importance. Are they, for example, exceptional and rare, or present though latent in many of us? Are the persons in whom they are manifested accidental and meaningless "sports," or are they the forerunners of a race of beings in whom consciousness has evolved at a higher level? What, if anything, can be learnt of the circumstances of their possession and of the optimum conditions for their manifestation by the

* From *Search For Truth*, by Harry Price, Collins, 15s.

* From *Search For Truth*, by Harry Price, Collins, 15s.

persons who possess them? All these are questions not only of high intrinsic interest, but of great relevance to the present condition and future prospects of our species. Is psychical research, then, a recognised branch of study at our Universities, endowed with professors, departments, investigators, students, laboratories, apparatus, books? It is not. It is, for the most part, pursued by amateurs like Mr. Price, who are prepared to give their time and money to investigations from which official science holds aloof, and to conduct a tireless campaign with the object of inducing official science to take off their shoulders the burden of the investigations which they must meanwhile make shift to carry on as best they can. (Mr. Price has offered to the University of London an extensive library of works on psychical research to be kept up to date at his expense by the addition of all subsequent publications, much laboratory equipment and the sum of £500 a year to finance research, provided that the University were willing to take over and entrust to a Department the functions previously carried out by the National Laboratory of Psychical Research. The Committee appointed by the University to advise agreed that "with certain restrictions, abnormal phenomena, physical, mental and pathological hitherto included under the term 'psychical research,' form a suitable subject for post-graduate research," and the University consented to house the library; it also gave Mr. Price a handsome dinner; but there, for the moment, the matter rests.)

The attitude is understandable. Until psychical research has established itself as a recognised member of the family of the respectable sciences, a University is bound to go slow. The question is why is it not so established? Why, in fact, does official science, when psychical phenomena present themselves for investigation, tend to draw in her skirts and pass by on the other side?

There are many reasons. First, there is the dubious past history of the claimant, only just emerging from the dimly lit purlieus of the séance room in which, from time immemorial, the quack has so happily and lucratively hunted the dupe. Much of the atmosphere of charlatanry still persists; mediums behave like outraged prima donnas when they are suspected, and like hysterical harridans when they are exposed—Mr. Price gives some diverting examples. Many mediums are fraudulent and their frauds are extremely ingenious; pieces of metal are secreted in foreskins, fragments of phosphorescent cheesecloth are swallowed and consigned to secondary stomachs, regurgitated and produced as ectoplasm, and so on. The scientific man possesses no special qualifications for detecting fraud, and naturally does not like being made to look a fool. On the set a thief to catch a thief principle, people with experience of conjuring should always be present at séances, but the presence of a conjurer affords fresh ground for suspicion.

A further difficulty is to be found in the non-reproducibility of phenomena. Let us suppose that, after exhaustive tests under controlled conditions, a medium has been accounted genuine. On the strength of these tests an eminent but sceptical scientist is invited to investigate. He inspects the controls, declares himself satisfied and joins the circle. For two or three hours he sits in comparative darkness and absolutely nothing happens. Moreover, his sitting may take place in conditions of considerable ignominy. Thus he may find that he is adjured to talk, to recite, to make any and every kind of noise, to listen to imbecile records on a gramophone, on the ground that the "spirit guides" like noise. He comes away unimpressed and disillusioned, and with his scepticism confirmed.

Here, again, is a poltergeist-haunted house. Pieces of soap are thrown, coal is moved, drawers are thrown open, bells ring, jugs are overset, and so on. The scientist arrives to investigate. He stays in the house for a couple of hours and nothing happens. Why should it? The investigator is told that he must come and live in the house for several weeks if he expects to see anything. Will he? No, of course not; he hasn't time. The trouble, is that nothing will remove the scepticism of reasonably educated men except "seeing for themselves." Yet where the conditions of the manifestation of phenomena are unknown, "things to see" cannot, it is obvious, be guaranteed.

There is the difficulty of time and the difficulty of money. Most competent investigators are busy men who, apart altogether from the expense to which they may be put (and most mediums demand substantial fees), cannot afford to give much time to non-repaying work.

Finally, there is the undelimited scope of the subject, which has become a sort of dustbin for the reception of whatever phenomena do not fit into the accepted categories of the established sciences. To their bewildering variety Mr. Price's book bears ample witness; the subjects which he has been asked to investigate include men buried alive, men walking on hot embers, talking mongooses, telepathic communications between twins, movements of matter in unbroken soap bubbles, coins that jump off ledges—in fact, any and every occurrence which physics or psychology are unable to account for by normal methods.

Mr. Price, a pioneer animated by the motives that led country gentlemen in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to build museums and laboratories on to their houses, has tackled them all. But it is time that we ceased to rely on the enthusiasm of the disinterested amateur.

C. E. M. JOAD

M.E.F.

OUT here one can see very clearly how Marius and Caesar and all those other ruffians managed to build their strength on provincial armies. In the present case, of course, the feeling is nothing like as strong, but the set-up is very much the same. After they've been out here about a year, troops become to a certain extent denationalised. They think of themselves less as Englishmen, and more as Middle-Easters, begin to attribute to themselves superior qualities of experience and realism, and write off the army at home as three million bums, and the civilian population as bummer. The ranks become also to a certain extent declassed. On the rare occasions when they think politically, they brood on irrelevancies such as the number of Canadians and Poles in England (theoretically, every one of them mauling some English woman) or tackle problems from the wrong angle (for instance, complaining that the pay of workers in some industries is too high, rather than that their own allowances are too low). This is not at the moment an attitude marked enough to be serious, and with the successful opening of a Western Front it would probably vanish almost altogether. There is, however, a danger, if demobilisation is at all delayed, of a slightly tough and cynical army of the Middle East coming back to a post-war England where all the good jobs have gone and throwing their weight *not* on the side of the progressive forces but of some Fascist agitator.

There is something also authentically epic about this "Middle East," if only one could get a frame for it. We have an assortment of nationalities that would make Caesar's legions look like a team from the Home Counties. The Russians, driving north through Hamadan, close-cropped, berry-brown, in dark blue breeches with knee-boots, grinning fit to bust and giving the V sign to everyone they pass: the diminutive Iraquis in khaki breeches and puttees mounting guard among the white hollyhocks on the Persian frontier: the Arab legion and the French *méharistes*, slender and almost girlish in their red and white *kefiyehs* and long brown cassocks, camped like old Tamerlane on the green steppeland, swaying round the fire in dances that might have come from "Sanders of the River": Indians everywhere, the neatest, cleanest and most dignified soldiers in our army—fat, bearded Sikhs, Punjabi Moslems with their pointed pugarees and Gurkhas (are those Gurkhas, with the almost Malayan features?), travelling impassively on the backs of trucks: coons everywhere, squatting round brush-fires, driving down main roads like a wind out of hell, grinning in road-gangs, but never, that I could see, working: on the Phoenician sea-coast a camp with a large crocodile mosaicked out in white pebbles with the word Basutoland: elegant Greek and Yugoslav officers, preening themselves on the streets of Alex.: Fighting French, Poles, Canucks, Yanks in jeeps, huge South Africans almost childlike in their docility, New Zealanders rough-hewn but looking intelligent. And Englishmen? Yes, there are quite a few Englishmen—nearly always to be recognised by their utter civilianity, the complete lack of martial fire or any other eccentricity, with which they stroll down streets to stare wistfully into shop-windows. And glimpses, not always with humour, of the Wops and Dutchies. This war is demonstrating, beyond any hope of refutation, the Unity of Man. No one, at least, who's been in the Middle East will want to deny it.

My admiration for the Indians increases daily. Not only are they first-rate fighters, but they're good technicians as well. One evening, I took in a total of four broken springs to an Indian workshop at 5 o'clock. They worked flat out and had them mended and back on the vehicle by half-past nine. There's no doubt about it. The East is staging a comeback. In two hundred years, probably less, India and China will count for more than Old Great Britain in the councils of the world.

R.A. SUBALTERN

THE SAILOR

By ALEXANDER BLOK.

In the autumn late,
The quays white with snow,
Out from the harbour
The heavy ships go.

Against black sky,
A crane stands upright;
One lantern sways
In the blizzard night.

A sailor, parted from his ship,
Staggers on the shore:
"All is lost and drunk away;
And I can do no more."

See, the first snow
Has fallen, fallen on
The quays of the harbour
From which the ships have gone.

Most pure, most tender
Winding-sheet—
Wrapped in it, sailor,
Is your sleep sweet?

Translated by FRANCES CORNFORD

IN THE BACKS

Too many of the dead—some I knew well—
Have smelt this unforgotten river smell,
Liquid and old and dank;
And on the tree-dark, lacquered, slowly passing stream
Have seen the boats come softly as in dream
Past the green bank.
So Camus, reverend sire, came footing slow
Three hundred years ago;
And Milton paced the avenue of trees
In miracle of sun and shade as now,
The dear, magnificent, unborn cadences
Behind his youthful brow.

Milton and Chaucer, Herbert, Herrick, Gray,
Rupert, and you forgotten others, say:
Are there slow rivers and bridges where you have gone away?
What new absorption have your spirits found?
What wider lot?
Some day in spring do you come back at will,
And tread with weightless feet the ancient ground?
O say, if not,
Why is this air so sacred and so still?

FRANCES CORNFORD

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Way of the World," at the Mercury Theatre

With the swirl of Millamant's first entrance Miss Sonia Dresdel should have put to flight the ghosts of earlier performances which hemmed the Mercury's already crowded stage. Mr. Dukes has done his best to simplify the rather tedious intrigues by artful cutting, but this play of plot and counterplot, coming and going, is hampered more than most by want of space, and the costumes, muddled in line and vaguely coloured, gave the company no help at all. It is fortunate that the play itself has elegance to spare, and throughout the first act one had time to consider the extraordinary modishness of Congreve's characters; they turn up every now and then in English comic writing like a family nose, and have their current being in the off-hand lovelies of Mr. Noel Coward and Mr. Evelyn Waugh. Miss Dresdel's Millamant has vitality, sparkle and a sense of wit, but lacks altogether the polish and style which should bring beauty to the part's extravagance. By contrast, Mr. Julian Randall's Mirabell was easy and sincere, without, however, suggesting the full range of this charming but slightly shady character. Miss Helen Burns as Foible seemed on better terms with her part than anyone else; she had the perfect blend of sly and simple. Lady Wishfort, on the other hand, should have been almost gross and was instead almost respectable. "Indulge your memories" says the new epilogue which Miss Dresdel spoke in place of the original; with the best will in the world, the advice is a little dangerous

"The Birds," at the New Theatre

The Sadler's Wells Ballet labours nowadays under a number of disadvantages, of which not the least is the undiscriminating enthusiasm of the audience. The most by dancers whose technique is obviously immature gets acclaimed as if it were *Petrouchka* with Karsavina and Nijinsky. At moments one inclines to suggest that an appropriate subject for a new ballet would be "The Emperor's New Clothes," but one ought to commiserate Miss de Valois, Mr. Helpmann, and their colleagues. For it is most disheartening to the serious artist to know that his best work is no more appreciated than his failures. Mr. Helpmann's new ballet is an unpretentious trifle, in which the comic movements of a dancer imitating a hen provide the principal interest. The music adapted by Respighi from unspecified "old masters" is playful and effective. Mr. Chiang Yee's scenery is rather fussy in a decadent Chinese tradition, but his costumes are elegant and personal. (These are European in style, but the Chinese taste shows in the use of kingfisher-blue and coral-pink.) Miss Moyra Fraser's facial gymnastics gave great pleasure to the audience; Miss Beryl Grey and Mr. Alexis Rassine distinguished themselves in a more traditional manner. Before *The Birds* Mr. Constant Lambert conducted *The Bird Actors*, his earliest work, a lively overture evidently written under the spell of Stravinsky.

"Let's Face It" at the London Hippodrome

The music and lyrics of *Let's Face It* are by Cole Porter, the cast is headed by Bobby Howes, the whole affair is presented by George Black, but a musical entertainment needs also a leading lady in the grand style such as Miss Lillie, Miss Lawrence or Miss Hale. Bobby Howes is a very agreeable performer, but he can make little out of this transatlantic jumble of doughboys and marital mix-ups. There is a pleasant music-hall dance from Jack Stanford, and some very good dancing by Halama and Konarski, though an unsuitable tune by Cole Porter is no fitting background for them. The piece is nearly saved by Joyce Barbour, who gives a brilliant performance. She has abundant personality, talent and distinction, and if Miss Kirkwood and Miss Leonard, who have been given leading parts, wish to learn a thing or two they should watch Miss Barbour. One does not wish to seem priggish, but are we not in a fine state of taste and wit when one of the characters is allowed to make an exit line out of a reference to his wife as "a bit of a bitch"?

"The Pied Piper," at the Odeon

"The Talk of the Town," at the Regal and the London Pavilion

The Pied Piper is an unexpectedly charming film of an old gentleman caught in Switzerland by the fall of France and bringing back a bevy of children to England. He starts, very reluctantly, with two, and others tag on from the streams of refugees on the roads and the marooned in blitzed villages. The horrors of invasion intrude on what is for the children an adventure bigger than they could have dreamed of. The mixture of adventure and tragedy is effectively and lightly achieved, thanks largely to the children, who all give delightfully natural performances, and to Monty Woolley in the part of the old gentleman. Ever since his appearance in *The Man Who Came to Dinner* one has been waiting to see Mr. Woolley again; here he is, elderly, sarcastic, kindly, dauntless, in tweeds and with a beard. He's an old dear; and it's to be hoped that we shall be given the chance of seeing him one day without the Shavian manner and the beaver. Sentiment and melodrama almost topple over towards the end of *The Pied Piper* in scenes with a Nazi officer who also, despite brutality, is intent on smuggling a little niece out of Europe. But it is the sort of film that can carry sentimental improbability without cracking. The final tableau shows us the old gentleman back in his London club, exchanging monosyllabic conversation with a fellow-member. "Just back from France." "Oh." There is a raid on, bombs whistle near, and the chandelier rocks. The old boys flicker an eyelid, but that's all.

The Talk of the Town extracts much incidental liveliness from the situation of an escaped gaol-bird, a famous lawyer and a pretty girl who attracts both, cooped up together under the same roof. Jean Arthur gives a delicious performance of divided sympathies and cross purposes. She is made to look outrageously silly at times and puts her foot in it with irresistible gaiety. Colman as the lawyer is bearded and "needs warming up." Cary Grant gives us the natural man who needs cooling off, with more infectiousness than usual. When the argument about legal ethics turns serious, as it is supposed to do from time to time, our sympathies begin to droop; but those moments are not too many. A brisk comedy prettily acted and directed.

THE CAP BADGE

Lines written by a Home Guard Platoon Commander recently instructed to "submit a full report" on the loss of a cap-badge by one of his men.

"No cap-badge?" said St. Peter. "Private Smith,
This is a serious matter, sir. Take pen
"And paper. State—in triplicate—forthwith—
"How was this Treasure lost, and where, and when."

"Smith," said St. Peter, "souls, like wars, are lost
"By faults that only fools consider small.
"Vain, sir, in Peter's Pence to count the cost.
"Write, Smith, and spare no details: write them all."

Smith sighed and wrote. St. Peter, frowning, read:
"I lost it."
"There's no more," said Smith, "to tell."
"Out!" roared the Saint, shaking his halo'd head.
St. Peter's halo followed Smith to hell.

M. R. K. BURGE

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Correspondence

DARLAN

SIR,—The impression made among our Allies by the arrangement with Admiral Darlan (stated by President Roosevelt to be temporary, but treated by the Admiral as permanent) is illustrated by the following extracts from the semi-official Free Norwegian paper *Norsk Tidend*:

"It was natural that the appointment of Darlan to the post of High Commissioner for North Africa should arouse the greatest astonishment and consternation not only among Frenchmen in and outside of France, but in the whole free world.

"A man whose name is intimately connected with the degraded Vichy régime, whose actions have been an unbroken series of crimes against his country and his people is suddenly elevated to the position of leader of the liberated French territories in North Africa.

"Yesterday he appealed to Frenchmen to rally to the 'new order' in Europe and to fight side by side with the Germans. To-day he appeals to his countrymen to fight against the Axis. What will he be saying and where will he be going to-morrow?"

Norsk Tidend then discusses whether Darlan is acting in collusion with Pétain or on his own account, and comes to the conclusion that in either case his object is to make French Fascism strong and agile enough to survive the Allies' victory and to determine the future of France. The military reasons that induced the American Army to treat with Darlan were no doubt genuine.

"But morally and psychologically this pact with Darlan may be of ominous significance. First of all for Fighting France, but also for the other occupied countries. President Roosevelt has issued a reassuring declaration stating that the present arrangement with Darlan is only temporary. But this statement does not remove the feeling of uncertainty that will subsist so long as Darlan remains High Commissioner.

"Let us therefore hope that the negotiations now being conducted may lead to a result that will correspond to the needs of Fighting France and the interests of the United Nations. The Darlan mystery shows how closely military and political considerations are bound up with each other, and what dangerous consequences may follow from basing action on one-sided views.

"The Darlan episode is also important for Norway and the other occupied countries. Political and military aims must go hand in hand, or else we stand on a slippery slope. Our aim, a free and democratic Norway, can never be gained by any compromise with Fascism. That no good Norseman has ever doubted. To that he will never agree."

So far *Norsk Tidend*. In conclusion may I recall that it was Allied Generals who first committed us to counter-revolutionary intervention in Russia by supporting Admiral Kolchak as the Darlan of Siberia (Russia's North Africa), and that Wilson, who was as good a democrat as Roosevelt, really believed at first that support of Kolchak was necessary as the most effective way of making war on Germany, that it did not mean taking sides in Russian internal affairs, and that it would liberate the Russian people from foreign influence and enable them to determine their own future through a freely elected Constituent Assembly?

EX-DIPLOMAT

SIR,—Although it may subsequently be shown that the rehabilitation of Admiral Darlan was less unwise and a less grievous insult to the course of freedom than it now appears, there can be no doubt that it has excited among multitudes in Britain and America feelings very similar to those aroused in 1808 by the publication of the articles of the Convention of Cintra. In that year, when Napoleon was at the height of his power, the Spanish and Portuguese peoples rose against the invader, and a British army was sent to the Peninsula with orders to support them. Although, after the battle of Vimiero, on August 21st, Wellesley could have taken Lisbon and compelled the French Army to surrender, he was restrained by his superior officers, Sir Harry Burrard and Sir Hugh Dalrymple, who concluded with the

French commander a Convention which stipulated that the French army should be conveyed back to France in British ships, which protected those whom we should call quislings from the vengeance of their countrymen, and which contained many other concessions generally regarded as insulting to our allies. These events moved Wordsworth to write a noble and still insufficiently appreciated treatise, in which he brought both the Convention itself and the general situation *to the test of those Principles by which alone the Independence and Freedom of Nations can be Preserved or Recovered*, and by which alone, it may be added, a new and better world order may be achieved. May I take this opportunity of bringing the following passage to the minds (or memories) of your readers?

The British Generals acted as if they had no purpose but that the enemy should be removed from the country in which they were, upon any terms. Now the evacuation of Portugal was not the prime object, but the manner in which that event was to be brought about; this ought to have been deemed first both in order and importance; the French were to be subdued, their ferocious warfare and heinous policy to be confounded; and in this way, and no other, was the deliverance of that country to be accomplished. It was not for the soil, or for the cities and forts, that Portugal was valued, but for the human feeling which was there; for the rights of human nature which might be there conspicuously asserted; for a triumph over injustice and oppression there to be achieved, which could neither be concealed nor disguised, and which should penetrate the darkest corner of the dark Continent of Europe by its splendour. We combated for victory in the empire of reason, for strongholds in the imagination.

J. B. LEISHMAN

UNPROMISED ISLAND

SIR,—May I ask Mr. Cranston a few questions concerning his article "Unpromised Island" in your issue of last week: Has he been to Mauritius since the Jewish deportees reached that island? Has he mingled with them before describing their lot in well-nigh lyrical terms? In short, does he speak from personal knowledge, after having examined and ascertained his facts, or is his article based on the "Interim Report on the Detainment Camp" made by Mr. H. S. Armitage, its Commandant? And what knowledge has he of Palestine to justify his final suggestion, which, though tentative, is the "sting in the tail" of his article, that "conceivably it is not possible for an overcrowded Palestine to accept more Jewish immigrants at this time"? So far from being overcrowded, Palestine is now short of labour, as is proved by the recent Labour Schedules issued by the Administration.

The full facts of the Mauritius deportation have not yet been given to the public, and Mr. Cranston's sudden incursion into the story is selective and dream-like. But whatever may be said about the Armitage Report and its rather rose-coloured account, even at this stage, I wish to pay homage to the fine humane work done by Lady Clifford, wife of the then Governor, and Mrs. Moody, wife of the Chief Secretary, among the deportees in the Mauritius Hospital.

L. B. NAMIER

NATIONALISM IN THE THEATRE

SIR,—I attended a performance of "Hedda Gabler" at the Mercury Theatre recently (produced with the assistance of CEMA) and was surprised to find, printed on the back of the programme, a notice to the effect that "all members of our company are of British birth. . . ."

Is this a new form of nationalism within the theatre, or is it done, in view of anti-foreign feeling, on behalf of the actors themselves?

It would be interesting to know this. In any case the printing of such a notice points to nationalism either on the part of the management or the prospective audience.

It would seem to me that if such nationalism is to be carried through to its logical conclusion, it is not consistent to perform the work of the non-British artist, Ibsen.

Surely the *value* of an artist counts, and not the patch of land where he happens to have been born.

G. M.

PALMYRA OF THE NORTH

SIR,—The tale of the ice palace and its glacial appointments prepared for an erring Prince Galitsin and his Calmuck bride by the Empress Elizabeth related by Mr. Christopher Marsden is, I am afraid, only a tale—a fairy tale. It has been related in many versions, applied to many personages and to many ages. As a small boy I heard it from my Russian nurse. In this case it was a negro who was the villain of the story.

Taking a common sense point of view, would it be reasonable to believe that any human being, *stripped naked* in the bitter cold of a Russian winter, thrust into an ice chamber and made to rest on an ice bed, would be alive at the end of even, say, two hours? I should say, however strong that human being be, he would be as dead as frozen New Zealand mutton long before that period had expired. Yet this same Prince Galitsin is made by Mr. Christopher Marsden to continue his unhappy existence after such an alleged experience!

Incidentally I may state that the red colour (which is a favourite shade in all northern countries) in which the Winter Palace was painted, took on a darker, dirtier and more sinister shade, owing to being exposed to the soot-laden and foggy atmosphere created by the cheap coal-driven cotton and woollen factories and engineering works of the Wiborg suburb situated just across the river Neva. When fresh this colour had a rosy tint. Possibly the legend was propagated by the fact that annually an ice palace was erected on the ice skating rinks and ice hills situated in the river.

It may be of interest to your readers to know that after the Great Fire of London, great heaps of debris accumulated at the head of the River Fleet. Much of this material was later used as ballast on these boats going to St. Petersburg then being built—and was then used for foundations of the new city.

H. H CHARNOCK

UNEMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGNERS

SIR,—I am a Polish subject and registered at the Polish Employment Exchange last year. At the time I was told, "Don't volunteer, you'll be called up soon enough." Since then I have heard nothing, except for receiving a short notice asking me to state whether I was employed, and where.

It appears very strange that when the Government seems to be so badly in need of young female volunteers for National Service, viz., the Three Services Campaign now in progress, foreign girls should not be called up.

Owing to circumstances over which I have no control, I cannot possibly volunteer at the moment, but if it were *compulsory* for foreigners to do some sort of National Service, as well as the British girls these circumstances would automatically alter.

Is something being done about this? I wonder

A PATRIOT

SIR,—In his recent letter about "Friendly Aliens" Lord Wedgwood told but half the story. I wonder if he knows that many Government departments categorically refuse employment to British subjects, born and educated in this country, who happen to be of so-called "enemy parentage." No consideration is paid to the possession of specialist qualifications, to active service in the 1914–1918 war, or to the fact that one's father was naturalised more than half a century ago.

Stranger still, key positions in some of these departments are held by men of unimpeachable ancestry, but with German or Italian wives. Is it assumed that graver risks of influence upon policy or of leakage of information may reside in a dead parent than in a living wife?

Yours, etc.,

X. Y. Z

PROPAGANDA TO HUNGARY

SIR,—Mr. Herczeg is obviously right when he says in your issue of November 14th that there are large sections of the Hungarian people who disapprove of the policy of the Hungarian Government and sympathise with the cause of the Allies. The division of opinion in Hungary is probably not on quite such simple lines as Mr. Herczeg suggests—the poor in our favour, the rich in favour of the Axis; but a deep division certainly does exist. When, however, Mr. Herczeg calls for "a sweeping propaganda against the Hungarian régime, promising a fair deal to the Hungarian people if they revolt against the Nazi-Fascist regime of the old Admiral," he is making the not uncommon mistake of assigning to propaganda the rôle of policy. The first essential of propaganda is that it should be honest, and must not interpret a policy which does not exist, nor make promises for which there is no foundation. Limited assurances of a fair deal for all our enemies have been given in the Atlantic Charter and other official documents; it has never been said that the degree of fairness will depend on such conditions as Mr. Herczeg suggests. If the responsible statesmen of the United Nations will make formal declarations to the effect suggested by Mr. Herczeg (and to be convincing to the Hungarian people those declarations need to be endorsed in binding form by Hungary's neighbours), no doubt the persons who enunciate our propaganda to Hungary will gladly communicate them, with the utmost emphasis, to the Hungarian people.

V. LANG

LATIN

SIR,—Miss Olga Beebee and Miss Gillian Cross say that Arts students who are obliged to take Latin for Responsions, etc., will not, when they come up to the University, need it in the syllabus for schools other than Classics. Won't they? True, they will not be examined in the Latin language, but they *will* be examined in a subject which they will not properly understand unless they have read some Latin literature. I know this from personal experience. I came up to Oxford to read English, knowing no Latin (I took Greek for Responsions.) I still, after many years of studying and teaching English Literature, know English literature up to the nineteenth century is so saturated in classical thought and imagery that much of it is only partly intelligible to one who has no *first-hand* knowledge of classical literature. I have struggled along as best I could, but I never cease to be conscious of my limitations.

I believe that what is true of English literature is to a greater or less degree true of the other Arts subjects—history, philosophy, modern languages.

SYBIL M. SCHREIBER

FLATS OR HOUSES

SIR,—Under the head "Plans for London," Mr. Arnold Whittick has undoubtedly tried to be as scrupulously fair as possible in stating to members of the Forces the case for flats. The results he has obtained are, however, in my opinion quite worthless, for the following reasons.

1. He is appealing to a specially selected class of person, i.e. the young man and, generally speaking, the young unmarried woman who would in the vast majority of cases have had no experience of living in flats, and certainly not in the kind of flat which he describes, but who had had experience of living in houses. It is too great a strain on the imagination to expect a popular response in favour of the untried and unknown.

2. The issue before the planning authority is not the simple one of having to decide *in vacuo* on the relative merits of semi-detached houses or flats. The problem with which the authority is faced is to provide accommodation for a certain number of families in a particular area within easy distance of the work of the bread-winner. This is particularly the case in areas where land values are very high. Are they to build, or permit the erection of, say, 12 houses per acre or of flats at 40–50? In other words, are 12 families to be allowed to live conveniently near their work, or are 40 or 50? If only 12, what is to happen to the remaining 28 or 38? Obviously they will have to live farther away. Moreover, with land at anything from £15,000 to £20,000 an acre, the land per house would work out at £1,250 to about £1,600 per dwelling, a prohibitive figure if houses are to be let at rents within the means of working-class families.

I would respectfully suggest to Mr. Whittick that if the problem is to be put fairly to the members of the Forces, these additional considerations should be put to them. Moreover, it is not sufficient to express a preference without providing an answer to the dilemma with which those who have to deal with the problem are faced.

LEWIS SILKIN

BOOKS IN GENERAL

MR. BRYANT'S book* serves its immediate purpose well, for it paints a picture of Britain at war with great skill and knowledge, and its vivid touches and its lively and intimate description of the life and mind of the time make it attractive reading. Pitt's commanding qualities stand out in its stirring pages, and they are qualities that make our pulses beat faster as we fight for our life to-day. It does not overlook the blunders of the British management of the war (no responsible book could disregard Fortescue's work) nor is it silent on the dark features of the society that found in Pitt so dignified and tenacious a leader. But though it is of course on a different plane from the rough handling of history that has produced *Young Mr. Pitt*, it suffers in some degree from the same defect, and it is a defect that is unfortunate at this moment.

Fisher remarked in his brilliant book *Bonapartism* that the power to make generalisations in politics is a source both of strength and weakness. The strength and weakness have never been better illustrated than they were in the French Revolution. Its leaders brought to the immense task of national reconstruction generous ideas thrown into principles and formulæ, and given by immortal phrases a lightning power that was to conquer space and time. To apply those ideas and give France at the same time an effective executive force during a revolution demanded a remarkable capacity for administration. The fatal decision not to allow members of the Constituent Assembly to be elected to its successor showed how unequal were the forces of common sense and quixotic enthusiasm in this bewildering hour. The situation, difficult enough in any conditions, was made much more difficult by the treason of the Court. The weakness of the generalising and imaginative method in politics showed itself in disorder, confusion and violence; the strength in the permanent influence of the ideas of 1789 on Europe. British films and British books that present the Revolution from the point of view of a nation that came into conflict with it, lay stress on the first, and are apt to give less than its importance to the second. Mr. Bryant's book seems to me to suffer from this fault.

Yet there never was a time when it was more desirable to emphasise the great value of the ideas France gave to the nineteenth century. France has been our ally and we hope she will be our ally again. Our enemies in France are busy inflaming French historical memories of our quarrels. The Vichy Government recently sent Admiral Abriel on a lecturing tour on the subject "England—our secular enemy," and *France* reproduced some time ago the text of instructions sent to the Legion making attendance at anti-British lectures compulsory. The spirit in which this particular quarrel is treated is thus of immediate political importance. But from every point of view including, of course, that of historical justice, it is desirable to insist on the great share of France in the civilisation for which we are fighting against Germany. To think of that civilisation without thinking of the ideas of 1789 is impossible. Of the documents that taught respect for human dignity none had such sweeping and moving power in Europe as the Declaration of the Rights of Man.

Mr. Bryant does much less than justice to this truth. After giving a vivid picture in his early chapters of the state of Europe in the eighteenth century he says later on that the war decided that "Pitt's—and Jeremy Bentham's—England, and not France's New Order was to shape the human future." If he had said that the war in establishing British naval supremacy had served and perhaps saved the liberties of Europe for the nineteenth century by preventing any single nation on the Continent from becoming so powerful on sea and land as to dominate Europe, everybody would have agreed with him. But to claim the shaping of the human future for any one country is surely nationalism run mad. France and Britain were not the only strong influences in the world. Germany, unfortunately, has done more than either of them to form Japan. Russia has borrowed from the West, but nobody would say that her great social experiments have much in common with Pitt's England. French and British influences both helped to determine the form and structure of European institutions in the nineteenth century and to free Italy and Greece. But if we confine ourselves to the social changes that extinguished the chief abuses of eighteenth-century Europe, the reduction of privilege, the disappearance of serfdom and torture, the spread of the passion for justice, the new feeling for equality, these all surely owed more to revolutionary France than to the England that defeated her. The *Code Napoléon* counted for more in Europe than British law and custom. The Napoleonic Empire itself broke down as a European system partly because the ideas of the Revolution, fermenting in peoples they had made self-conscious, had created a disintegrating force too strong for the genius who had used those ideas as an instrument for his personal ambition. When Meredith wrote:

> "She that divinely shook
> The dead from living man"

he was speaking not of Britain but of France.

The chief contribution of British history to the modern world is the creation of a federation of free peoples; the product of a generous wisdom. Pitt struck a hard, perhaps a fatal, blow at the hope of bringing Ireland into such a federation by the lack of generosity and wisdom in his Irish policy.

It is because Mr. Bryant, full of the dramatic quality of the national struggle, does not let his imagination play on the vast tragedy of the quarrel between two peoples who had such immense gifts to make to the world, that he underrates the importance of the opposition of Fox and his small but brilliant party. The French Revolution had touched Fox's generous imagination as the Irish case touched Gladstone's in 1885. Fox and Gladstone both had a romantic and prophetic quality, derived as it happened from the same source, the influence of the same great poets, struggling with another nature; in Fox's case his second nature came, as Christopher Hobhouse put it in his brilliant study, from his wilful and imperious Stuart blood. This second nature made Fox the worst tactician in British history. Pitt with his cool judgment and his steady self-control could beat him whenever they were rivals for political power. But when Fox's imagination was touched he was a man of deeper vision than Pitt. The French Revolution broke out when he had spent some years in arid and factious politics, for he had had no great cause to touch his imagination since the bold stroke at Indian misgovernment that had cost him office in 1783. The French Revolution set his best nature on fire. He saw very soon that the despotic rulers were likely to come into conflict with the Revolution, and that the greatest of all calamities would be that England should find herself on the wrong side. He wanted Britain to befriend the Revolution as Burke wanted her to join in crushing it.

The very thing that Fox dreaded happened. We got into the war as the allies of Governments that had partitioned Poland and made no secret of their desire to partition France. Had we won the war in the first few years that would have been the fate of France. Fox held that that would have been not only a disaster to Europe, but also in a special sense a disaster to Britain. The intention to dismember her was announced by the Allies in April 1793; long before any scheme of Napoleonic conquest had appeared. It was this threat that roused France to her heroic resistance. Not only did Pitt have to ally himself with the pirates; he found himself before long the symbol in Europe of an implacable hostility to the Revolution. Fox was therefore not to be blamed for thinking in 1792 and 1793 that every effort should be made to avert these evils, nor for thinking, after we had got into the war, that we should prevent it from becoming a war to restore the ancient regime.

Was this war between the leaders of civilisation inevitable? Nobody can say that it could have been averted, but nobody can study the account of the negotiations given by so strong a supporter of Pitt as Holland Rose without seeing that if the negotiations had been in the hands of men with Fox's fundamental sympathy with the Revolution, their issue might have been different. Pitt was anxious to avoid war because he wished to conserve the strength of the England he had nursed back to health after the American disaster by his courage and integrity and skill in administration. He was therefore for non-intervention. But if he had had Fox's grasp of the moral significance of the Revolution, and of the consequences of a British war against it, he would undoubtedly have made a bolder, earlier and more constructive effort for peace; he would have tried to check German aggression and to gain French confidence by giving France support. Unhappily, though he did not want to go to war, he shrank from anything like co-operation with France. "Pitt and Grenville," said Holland Rose, "shrouded themselves in their insular and innate austerity." It is difficult to believe that if Pitt, who told Wilberforce it would be a short war, had foreseen the next twenty years, he would not have been less unbending. Grenville, who repelled France before she became a military danger, was a defeatist in the Peninsular War when Britain was fighting not against a revolution but to save Europe from a tyrant.

The tendency to find parallels between our present war and Pitt's war is dangerous, for the contrasts are all-important. Spiritually, the French Revolution had nothing in common with the Nazi Revolution. Its fundamental ideas were as large, generous and emancipating as the fundamental Nazi ideas are degrading and brutal. It struck fire at once among the thinking artisans in Britain, who were beginning to resent their exclusion from politics. On the other hand, it soon became unpopular among the governing class, and that unpopularity became a violent hatred. As the war progressed this hatred inevitably had the effect of creating a strong prejudice against all Reform. In these conditions Fox and his followers were serving the cause of national unity by taking a course that seemed at the time so adverse to it. They prevented the French Revolution from becoming a fatally dividing line between classes. Indeed, they used it to create a Liberal Party which could come to some kind of understanding with the new democratic forces. "If Fox had gone over to Pitt and anti-Jacobinism," says Mr. Trevelyan, "there would never have been a Whig Liberal Party, and the process of British politics in the nineteenth century would very probably have been by armed revolution and reaction instead of by Parliamentary reform."

The Foxites in these years were the guardians of British liberties. They opposed the Treason and Sedition Bills; they attacked Pitt's measures against the trade unions (the speech of Holland, Fox's nephew, in the Lords on this subject was distributed as propaganda by the Northern workmen's societies); they supported a minimum wage in agriculture on the ground, as Fox put it, that it was inconsistent with the self-respect of the poor to be dependent on the benevolence of the rich, and that a minimum wage they would receive not as charity but as a right. Fox, yielding as Mr. Lascelles suggests, to the temptations of a sudden old age, was unhappily in secession when Pitt carried his disastrous Union with Ireland, but he made his views known, and Sheridan made some of his greatest speeches in opposition to it. During these years Pitt has to his credit a signal act of courage and wisdom; the introduction of the Income Tax. His courage and constancy distinguish him from all the rulers of the Continent. But if we look at the next thirty years of British history, with the fierce misery that followed the Peace, we can see what an immense advantage it was to Britain to have, within the class brought up in this sheltered world of privilege, men of equal constancy in asserting the rights of the British poor against selfish fear.

J. L. HAMMOND

* *The Years of Endurance*, 1793-1802. By Arthur Bryant. *Collins*. 12*s*. 6*d*.

NEW NOVELS AND STORIES

Not Me, Sir. By J. T. C. PEMBER. *Cape*, 8s. 6d.
A Time for Silence. By ANDRÉ MAUROIS. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 6s.
Then We Shall Hear Singing. By STORM JAMESON. *Cassell.* 8s. 6d.
English Story. Third Series. Edited by WOODROW WYATT. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

A creative novel must clearly have novelty. But there is a confusion about the quality which springs from a spurious and trivial sense in which the word is often used. The novelist who sets out to write a novel on a new subject simply falls into the pit of oddity. Who would admire a novel for describing the love affair of an octogenarian for the ghost of Queen Christina? Yet such books are written. True, novelty is a quality in the writer, novelty of vision. Subjects are eternal, and eternally unexplored. "Il y a en tout de l'inexploré," wrote Flaubert, and this is no less true because seventy prolific years of fiction have passed since he wrote it.

Thus the thoughtless reader might reject Mr. Pember's book on the grounds that it is "just another novel about a private school. This is clearly seen to be an inane condemnation if one changes the comment to "just another novel about childhood." The theme is eternal, and if the setting is particular so is every setting of every novel that has ever been written. The question here is simply whether the book contributes to the total of human experience, or whether it merely jogs along old tracks. For my part I found no difficulty in deciding that *Not Me, Sir*, contributes something valuable and new.

The framework is conventional. Julian Whitehead arrives on the first page for the first day of his first term at school. He is much above his contemporaries in intelligence, in sensitivity, even, when he chooses, in athletic achievement. The masters are for the most part *entirely* inadequate. The other boys are, collectively, monsters of crude savagery and stupidity. There is nothing new in any of this: the novelty is all in the detail. A moment on a cliff-top when the awful headmaster reveals the soft belly under his armour; "You won't let me down, will you, Julian?": the boot boy at bay in a doorway, screaming inarticulate abuse at his young gentlemen assailants: the haven of the outdoor lavatories where alone privacy is possible. It is hard to describe the quality of this book without a burden of quotation. Time after time a nail is hit sharply on the head, a new impression vividly forms, and remains. This is partly due to the skill of Mr. Pember's writing. He can create a smell or sound or appearance which will surely evoke a response even in those who have never known the linoleum, the coal-tar soap and the trestle tables of these peculiar institutions.

Unfortunately the effect of the detail is partly marred by the whole. There are relatively few incredible incidents, but there is a taint of propaganda in the selection. Brutality, cunning and disloyalty are all true qualities of small boys at boarding schools: masters are often feeble, unimaginative and unkind. But the impression grows that Mr. Pember is attacking rather than describing; the passions of the author intrude uncomfortably and doubt is thrown on the whole. This becomes clearest of all at the very point where Mr. Pember seems to recognise it himself. In an effort to provide some small contrast to the *schweinerei* he introduces a sympathetic master. But his Mr. Carrington is by far the least convincing character in the book, an affected wet who is rightly killed off in a motor accident. Propaganda in the novel has been soundly trounced, but perhaps insufficiently understood. Few people doubt that a novel is not the best medium for advocating a second front. But a novel which attacks or defends its own characters is no less propagandist.

And yet in the end the detail of this book easily redeems the whole. The social life of small boys is brutal and unkind, doubly so when their only contacts with adults reveals on a grander scale the very vices to which they themselves have a natural propensity.

Mr. Pember has added his valuable perception to this statement.

A Time for Silence is at the remote pole from Mr. Pember's book. Its merit is that the author never at any point intrudes. He has no message and no conceivable temptation to propaganda.

The sheer skill and intelligence of the book make it internally unassailable. There are no contradictions, no false emphases, no mistakes. If the whole is accepted, little can be said against the parts. M. Maurois has written an exceedingly simple story about a farming couple in the Dordogne. The Romillys are a devoted and admirable couple, but each is haunted by an appalling incident in the past. The incident rears an ugly head, but love and mutual trust are able to defy it. This is a pleasant and convincing reversal of the post-Hardy school which makes misunderstandings so arbitrarily insoluble. There is no novelty in this book; the characters and situations are all restatements of more distinguished prototypes. But if a novel can be justified by discretion and intelligence alone *A Time for Silence* is well justified. It is a distillation of the French provincial novel, not a parody nor yet an outstanding example.

So rich a tradition may perhaps carry a few graceful if uninspired repetitions.

Of the three novels under review Miss Storm Jameson's comes closest to the ghost of Queen Christina. She has provided the familiar background of a Nazi protectorate, but she has not, it appears, been content with the conventional horrors. Five years after the war the invaders discover a new weapon. A simple operation on the brain renders the victim "available, docile, obedient . . . but the body left fit to work with." But why invent? If horror and pity are the purpose of the book the material is surely rich enough. The book ends with the partial recovery of the victims and a revolution, which proves, we are told, that humanity and freedom will always triumph in the end. If Miss Jameson invents an operation she has every right to invent recovery from it. But nothing is proved except that the invented operation was unsuccessful. There is no novelty of vision here, and invention sadly fails to compensate for the lack of it.

The third edition of *English Story* is a very good collection indeed. The only pity is that the editor's discernment is by no means equalled by the generalisations of his foreword. The vigour with which Mr. Woodrow Wyatt condemns his immediate predecessors is a gloomy perpetuation of their own worst fault. In the Thirties manifestos were prolific in condemnation of the Twenties. Now it seems that the Forties too must insist on the tight little right little confines of their decade. Evidently the new line is to condemn realism; to avoid social issues and to return to the imagination. And the Fifties? And are the Nineties to be naughty again? At one point Mr. Woodrow Wyatt states a simple aim, to collect the best short stories he can find. Need any more be said? Need he, for example, be so ludicrous as this: "The task of digesting Marx, Joyce, Proust and Co. has been adequately performed by the Left-Wing group"? It is all the odder in that Mr. Woodrow Wyatt has shown an admirable catholicity in his selection. The great merit of the book is precisely that the stories don't fit into any doctrinaire category at all. It is admirable that Elizabeth Bowen and Osbert

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If any law is to be laid down it is surely that writers should be left alone. Having collected so diverse a flock it would be a shame if Mr. Woodrow-Wyatt tried to chastise them into any sort of uniformity—even the uniformity of opposition to their predecessors. PHILIP TOYNBEE

MAKING SOVIET MAN

The Russian Peasant and Other Studies. By SIR JOHN MAYNARD. *Gollancz.* 15s.

Russian Glory. By PHILIP JORDAN. *Cresset Press.* 7s. 6d.

The Russian peasant has developed in twenty-five years from a *muzhik*, a "mannikin," into a Soviet man. How the change has taken place and from what origins, Sir John Maynard has now described in unique detail, adding to his own observation the previously unpublished evidence of earlier sociologists like Dr. Shingarev, author of *The Dying Village*.

In Shingarev's village, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the cattle drank at a dung-dammed pond; tuberculosis and syphilis were widespread; two people only, a carpenter and a mason, had beds; as there was no sanitation, excrement was trodden down around the entrance to the houses and eaten by the domestic animals; bugs were everywhere except in the very poorest households where it was too barren and cold even for bugs to live. On this chronic discomfort was imposed the seasonal fatigue in the fields and the hungry interval when the store had been eaten and the new crops weren't yet gathered. Accepting this order of suffering as fatally as sun and rain, the peasant had nothing to hope for but the richness of the after-life; the boundary of his land marked his worldly horizon.

Out of this village darkness and "idiocy," as Lenin called it, a hundred million peasants have emerged into a bright, human dignity. They are the life-blood of the country because the Russian peasant now at work in the fields is father, grandfather and brother to the Red Army man and the new workers of the dispersed industries. Sir John Maynard has convincingly interpreted the Soviet economic measures which, by giving the peasant security and a disposable money surplus for buying consumer's goods, have brought him into closer contact with the town. However much the war will depress his standards, the peasant has seen a new life and will fight savagely to defend it.

The weakest part of Sir John Maynard's book is his study of Soviet nationalities. From his available evidence, he isn't satisfied that the Soviet Union has solved its national problems, but while quoting less reliable observers, ignores Fannina Halle's *Women in the Soviet East*, the best book yet published on the formerly colonial peoples. The Soviet Government has ended its national problems by ending the economic antagonism which caused them. In complaining that economic centralism does not always correspond with national economic advantage, Sir John Maynard has merely emphasised that Soviet rule has abolished the economic privilege of peoples together with that of individuals.

I could have wished that before Philip Jordan had written his vivid, sympathetic and stirring book, he had read Sir John Maynard's description of how the Russian used to live. The station waiting-room littered with exhausted peasants, the diet of potatoes and watery cabbage soup, the rags around the feet and the bed over the stove which sometimes shocked liberal visitors to Russia were the trailing remnants of the evil pre-revolutionary years and of the hard life of the 1920's; the vast material and educational transformation, bound up with the Revolution's ethical and moral programme, did not affect Russia evenly. To-day, the same hardships and the methods of suffering them have returned. Jordan would have less reason to deplore the low standard of life if he understood its origins better.

But his reporting of the Russian glory is as magnificent as a salute of guns. Through his eyes, you see the movement and hear the sound of a people organised for battle, determined, whatever its wounds, to stand alive over the enemy's dead body. And his blasting of the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation for demanding from the Russians a brokerage of three-sixteenths of a penny per lb. of rubber over the world price when the Red Army was retreating on Moscow, is a piece of invective which should be framed in the offices of all the departmental chiefs and business men in Britain and America who, through apathy or dislike, delay supplies for our ally by a single hour. MAURICE EDELMAN

THE AEOLIAN HARP

The Romantics. An Anthology chosen by GEOFFREY GRIGSON. *Routledge.* 10s. 6d.

This anthology, like the paintings of Mr. John Piper (to whom it is dedicated), is a sign if not of a Romantic revival, at least of a rising taste for the picturesque. Whereas the Romantic poets and painters were wholeheartedly thrilled by Nature and exotic fantasy, the modern response is sophisticated, detached, and, as in Mr. Betjeman's poems, sometimes humorous. We have developed so nice a sense of period that we can enjoy almost anything that is intensely characteristic of its time. There is even, I think, a danger of our values becoming confused, of our mistaking the "amusing" for the beautiful. Because it has become possible to be interested in the encaustic tiles of a Gilbert Scott church, let us not suppose that these are anything but hideous; or very soon all sense of quality will vanish, and the pleasure procurable from Chartres and Tewkesbury will be correspondingly impoverished. This warning is addressed, of course, not to Mr. Grigson and his friends, but to their ingenuous disciples. The Romantic Movement produced not only sublime works of art but some of the silliest balderdash to which the human spirit has ever stooped, ranging from the verses of Robert Mongomery to the Gothic villas of North Oxford. Even the pestiferous doctrines with which the German people have been so easily bemused can be considered a part of the Romantic legacy. And while one can hardly overestimate the enrichment of sensibility effected by the followers of Rousseau, the human condition to-day makes one wish that the tradition of Voltaire had been more widely spread and efficacious.

Mr. Grigson divides his learned and entertaining anthology into four sections. The first shows the dawn of Romanticism in the eighteenth century—Gray, Burns, Horace Walpole, Beckford, Gilbert White, Macpherson, Smart, Crabbe and above all, Blake. (James Thomson is absent.) The second represents the noon—Coleridge, the Wordsworths, Landor, and Constable. The third depicts "the sensual valley"—Keats, Shelley, De Quincey, Leigh Hunt, Haydon. The fourth reveals "the finish"—Beddoes, Clare, Barnes, Hood, and the fascinating Darley. The divisions are not strictly chronological; and since Mr. Grigson includes Rossetti, there seems no reason for excluding Tennyson, who was the principal legatee of the great Romantics. But an anthology is above all a personal confession,

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and the critic, I think, should resist the temptation to remodel it according to his own taste. Mr. Grigson's style shows itself more happily in his notes than in his preface, and one wishes he had made them much fuller.

The earliest quotation dates from 1726—from the antiquarian Stukeley; the latest from 1875—from Winwood Reade. Mr. Grigson has exhumed a number of unfamiliar authors, such as Bishop Pontoppidon, Mickle, Langhorne, Rutty, Leyden, Henry Richter, Elton, Danby, Dendy, and Edward Kenealy. (The last, he declares, "did not come to terms with the century": the same could be said of Charles Peace.) One of the discoveries on which he is most to be congratulated is a series of poems translated from the Chinese by J. F. Davis and published at Macao in 1834. These have the directness, though not the delicacy of rhythm, that we enjoy in Mr. Waley's versions. The selections from Hood come, to me at any rate, as a revelation, especially *The Last Man* and *Tom Tatters' Birthday Ode*:

> And Vulcan, Mars, and Hector of Troy, and Jupiter and his wife,
> And Phoebus, from his forked hill, coming down to take a knife,
> And Mercury, and piping Pan, to the tune of "Old King Cole,"
> And Venus the Queen of Love, to eat an ox that was roasted whole . . .
> Come fill a bumper up, my boys, and toss off every drop of it!
> Here's young Squire Ringwood's health, and may he live as long as Jason;
> Before Atropos cuts his thread, and Dick Tablet, the bungling mason
> Chips him a marble tea-table, and a marble tea-urn a-top of it?

The exploitation of incongruities was a favourite Romantic device; it became rather tiresome in Browning's humoresque poems, but the nonsense of Lear and Carroll is a rich part of the bequest. Two of Mr. Grigson's quotations summarise the main drive of the Romantic Movement:

> Imagination, the real and eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow. (*Blake.*)
> Painting is with me but another word for feeling. (*Constable.*)

This is not the place in which to attempt an analysis of the connection between imagination and feeling—the two functions that it was the Romantic mission to exalt. But one may notice that the poets nourished their feelings and imaginations upon a wonderfully varied diet—beech-gatherers and opium and Grecian urns and charnel-houses. While most of the poets were bucolic, whether they wandered over Sca Fell or the Euganean Hills, Lamb was stimulated only by London and old books, London which he found "a pantomime and a masquerade," crowded with things, he said, that "work themselves into my mind and feed me without a power of satiating me." But all the Romantic surrendered themselves to experience with an unquestioning completeness. (Mr. Grigson justly calls the Aeolian Harp "the prime Romantic image.") Thus they succeeded in identifying themselves with whatever spectacle they chose to contemplate. "The setting sun will always set me right," Keats wrote, "or a Sparrow come before my Window I take part in its existence and peck about the gravel." Even a scientist like Sir Humphry Davy felt such a sympathy with Nature that he would, he declared, have "felt pain in tearing a leaf from a tree."

Keats and Constable considered truth and beauty to be inseparable or even identical; Blake and Poe thought them different from one another, and even antagonistic. Such divergencies are an obstacle to all generalisations about the Romantic Movement, but one can, I think, decide that like all doctrines which denigrate the intellect, Romanticism makes a bad foundation for life, however fertile it may be in Art. The small men reeled; the biographies of even the great are not edifying: *Nightmare Abbey* remains a valid criticism. Yet, as one gazes at the variegated panorama presented by Mr. Grigson, it compels the deepest admiration. In a hostile environment, this was one of the supreme flowerings of the human spirit.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

PANACEA

Time and the Timeless. By ROSALIND MURRAY. *The Centenary Press.* 5s.

Perhaps only someone who shares her point of view could do justice to Miss Murray's latest attempt to diagnose the evils of our time and to insist once more that the sole remedy is to be found in totalitarian Christianity. This book adds little to what was said in *The Good Pagan's Failure*; those who were convinced by that book will enjoy this, whilst those who found the former book entirely unsatisfactory will have no reason to judge this one differently. Miss Murray's thesis is well summed up in St. Augustine's dictum on her title page: *Peccatum nihil aliud est quam, neglectis alternis, temporalia sectare.*

To one who does not share her point of view it seems regrettable that Miss Murray is content to say over again what has been so often said without making any attempt to show precisely, in detail, how the daily life of "modern man" compares unfavourably with the daily life of "mediaeval man." She is fond of talking in abstractions, she revels in "isms," and is pleased to find a parallel in various ancient heresies for contemporary views which she rejects. This sort of commentary is unenlightening. The present reviewer—frankly unsympathetic to Miss Murray's point of view—longs for one clear statement of what Miss Murray understands by the contrast between materialism and idealism as a philosophy of life. It is not clear whether she regards materialism as sufficiently defined by reference to the pursuit of temporal things and the neglect of eternity or whether she would also interpret materialism metaphysically. Further, is "materialism" (in her sense, whatever that may be) to be regarded as synonymous with "anti-idealism"? As an example of anti-idealism she cites "the popular success of the review (*sic*) *1066 and All That*," and she adds, by way of explanation: "The whole point of this production consisted in the complete debunking of English history, more especially any episodes of an ennobling or inspiring nature." It is true that this example is given in a footnote, but it is a singularly revealing footnote. The present reviewer suffers from the disability of not having seen the revue, but judging from the book it is difficult to understand how this light-hearted comic entertainment can be regarded as derogatory of ennobling episodes in English history. Is a sense of fun incompatible with the recognition of spiritual values? Occasionally one is tempted to think that the ability to laugh at episodes in German history would be a sign of grace in Hitler and his associates. To admit this is not in the least to deny the evils of our times.

One of the strongest obsessions which beset Miss Murray in her indictment of "the modern mind" is that "for the modern mind, its being 'old' is one of the chief objections to Christianity." It does not occur to her that the objection may be not that Christianity is "old," but that it is not true. Nowhere does she attempt to meet a difficulty of this kind; she is content to take refuge in the empty abstraction of "a timeless truth"—a conception nowhere explained but cluttered up with long high-sounding words. Oddly enough, Miss Murray provokes one reader at least to murmur, *Non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum suum.*

L. SUSAN STEBBING

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GRAMOPHONE NOTES

BRAHMS: *Symphony No.* 1. N.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, cond. Toscanini (H.M.V. DB8939–43).

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No.* 4. Hallé Orch., cond. Constant Lambert (Col. DX8185–9).

RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: *The Battle of Kershenetz*, and

GRIEG: *The Last Spring*. Boston Symphony Orch., cond. Koussevitzky (H.M.V. DB6136).

FRANCK: *Pièce Héroïque*. (Trans. O'Connell.) San Francisco Symphony Orch., cond. Monteux (H.M.V. DB6135).

HANDEL: *Water Music* (arr. Harty). Hallé Orch., cond. Malcolm Sargent (H.M.V. C3306–7).

MOZART: *Fantasia and Fugue in C for Piano* (K394). Denis Matthews (Col. DX1095).

CHOPIN: *Nocturne in D Flat*, op. 27, and

CHOPIN: *Berceuse*. Solomon (H.M.V. C3308).

SCHUBERT: *Impromptu in A Flat*. Kentner (Col. DX1093).

SZYMANOWSKI: *Chant de Roxane*, and

FALLA: *Danse Espagnole*. Heifetz (H.M.V. DB2846).

DELIUS: *Légende for Violin and Piano*. Henry Holst and Gerald Moore (Col. DX1094).

GOUNOD: "*All Hail, thou Dwelling*" (Faust), and

WAGNER: *Prize Song* (*The Mastersingers*). Webster Booth with Hallé Orch. (H.M.V. C3309).

HANDEL: "*Where'er you Walk*" (*Semele*), and

MENDELSSOHN: "*Be Thou Faithful unto Death*" (*St. Paul*). Webster Booth with Hallé Orch. (H.M.V. C3305).

VERDI: "*From Fair Provence*" (*La Traviata*), *and*

MOZART: "*Say Good-bye Now to Pastime and Pleasure*" (*Figaro*). Dennis Noble, with Hallé Orch. (H.M.V. C3304).

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: "*Linden Lea*," and

BAX: "*I Heard a Piper Piping*." Astra Desmond, acc. Gerald Moore (Decca M522).

Brahms's First Symphony is one of those works which were too long heralded in advance and too greatly venerated for some time afterwards. A reputation, to be durable, must be gradual; but the "Tenth" Symphony is a sufficiently remarkable work for the misnomer to be permanently vexing. No doubt I shall be accused of impertinence if I say that the heroism and lyricism alike of this music seem to me to-day somewhat thick-fingered. The emotion is genuine, but not—I cannot help thinking—of the very best quality. There were flaws in Brahms—lapses of character which showed in the man as grossness and discourtesy, in the orchestral composer as a musical substance that is consistently heavy and provincial, and a surface glare fatiguing to the ear. His greatness and his faults all came to a head in his First Symphony, so inextricably mixed that we cannot enjoy the one without being offended by the other. The most a conductor can do in the circumstances is to care for incidental beauties of detail and phrase, and, for the rest, to carry the whole thing through with an impetus that allows us no occasion for doubt; and this Toscanini very effectively does. The beauty of detail is to be observed in such things as his performance of the allegretto and of the oboe tune in the Adagio. The first and last movements are given the forward drive and logical articulation of huge single speeches. This is altogether one of the best sets Toscanini has given us, for his recording is a good deal less harsh than usual, though the string tone suffers to a certain extent from distortion throughout.

Tchaikovsky—perhaps fortunately—did not admire Brahms's music. As a symphonist he drew on very different sources—sources pictorial and literary, harnessed to a technique less impeccable in the constructive faculty than in the purely orchestral. His feminine emotionalism and dislike of logic, his imagination, at once lurid and fanciful, are more obviously displayed in works like *Francesca da Rimini*; but the symphonies, though constructed on a large scale in obedience to sonata form, hark back, in their rhythms and thematic material, to the dance-suite, and look forward in other ways to the freer rhapsodic developments of the early twentieth century. Mr. Lambert's problem was here different from Toscanini's; the beauty and charm of this symphony is all on the surface; the emotion has to be given weight and the whole composition held firmly down if each movement is not to fall apart into pieces which will appear of themselves frivolous. And Mr. Lambert must be said to succeed admirably. His first movement has not perhaps quite the *Schwung* of Koussevitzky's performance, and the timpani, in that important passage in the middle of the movement, seem oddly out of tune. But the slow movement and the Scherzo leave nothing to be desired, and the set, as a whole, is well worth having.

There is nothing much to say about *The Battle of Kershenetz*, except that it is a very competent piece of programme music with the advantage of clear outlines. The Grieg song-without-words is pretty in a sentimental way, but suffers from inflation. Both are very well recorded. From the latter point of view Franck's *Pièce Héroïque* is even more remarkable. Oh that this piece itself were worthy of Pierre Monteux and his wonderful orchestra! Originally conceived for organ in 1878 (the year before the Piano Quintet), it begins rather well, but soon settles down into the sickly pathos of extreme chromaticism, and the final apotheosis recalls the worst moments of *Lohengrin*. Franck at his second best is surely unendurable to-day. How much more truly heroic is Handel's *Water Music*! A good, inexpensive recording of this optimistic work supplies a felt need—and here it is.

To play Mozart's *Fantasia and Fugue in C* as if it were by Liszt is a temptation inherent in the surface aspect of the music. To have resisted the temptation as thoroughly as Denis Matthews has done deserves our highest respect. He gives a most musicianly performance, on the side of slowness and tranquillity, without a moment's technical display. The same is true, as far as it ought to be so, of Solomon's Chopin and Kentner's Schubert. Pianists who are always having to play concertos sooner or later find themselves in the position of opera singers faced by a *Lieder* programme; their ability outruns their discretion and the result is not chamber music at all. Solomon does, I think, always avoid this pitfall; Kentner not always, but certainly here. All these three records are, in their very different ways, striking examples of how to play to a limited audience.

It is a matter for regret that Szymanowski's very beautiful and dramatically effective opera, *King Roger*, has never been heard here in any form. But even a fragment, played in a transcription for violin and piano, is better than nothing. The *Chant de Roxane*, like so much of its composer's music, is a fascinating, elusive, exotic piece, played by Heifetz with perfect understanding. The dance from *La Vista Breve*, on the reverse, suits another mood. Though slight enough, it has real distinction. On the other hand, I can find nothing to say for the Delius *Légende*, a feeble and sugary work which would be better forgotten.

If anyone doubts that Webster Booth is among the finest singers in England, he will do so no more after hearing this tenor's latest records. There is no need to dwell on the songs themselves, which are sufficiently well known already; but one might perhaps point out that the *Faust* aria is the best thing in the opera, and that the singer makes it sound even better than possibly it is.

I cannot care very greatly for Dennis Noble's singing of Verdi and Mozart. There is nothing objectionable about it; but I hold the opinion that this kind of thing should be sung by a virtuoso or not at all. This record puts me in mind of Stothard imitating Watteau.

Miss Desmond is perfectly at home in the songs she has chosen; whether you care for the songs themselves is another matter.

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Week-end Competitions

No. 669

Set by Thomas Smallbones

You are 21, and you have just seen the engagement announced between your father and a girl of your own age and set. The usual prizes are offered for an extract (not more than 150 words) from your letter of congratulation which will include advice useful to a parent marrying into your generation.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, December 7th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 666

Set by G. de Vavasour

The usual prizes are offered for the most tantalising fragment of a lost Elizabethan play. Sixteen lines only are to be "discovered."

Report by G. de Vavasour

"Significant that this competition is No. 666. It is a bit of a beast!" observed a competitor darkly. For all this, a quantity of uncharted Elizabethan drama has been unearthed, generally by raids and demolition workings, according to the helpful notes provided. A number of the original documents were sent—crabb'd writing, sad-coloured ink, torn pseudo parchment and all. The most Shakespearean handwriting was undoubtedly that of William Bliss. Scenes of death or of ravishing, patriotic exhortations, romantic passages, sinister monologues made the pattern; there was little clowning. Some sought to "tantalise" by theme alone, and these fragments, when they were not Websterian ("The Humped Seducer, or the Tragedy of the Lecherous Dwarf") or Nostradamian (Hitt a tyrant, gallant Muscovites, Afric battles, Gubbles and stout Gurun, the pompous Caesarenuovo) were mainly concerned with the private lives of Queen Elizabeth and of Shakespeare. Emily Frazer provided an intriguing character "Frank Bacon, a Fool," who, when asked if "my Lord of Verulam" was of his kin, replied: "None that I know. A butcher's son am I." But revelations, even if the manuscript is torn at the point of discovery, are not enough, without that purple in the language which we have reasonably expected ever since Lamb first introduced us to the Elizabethan moment. C. H. Barnett, on the unpromising subject of Canute, wrote pleasing poetry. Victor Eoves caught the note of Shakespeare's middle period in his Abbot's dignified speech. I liked too Lieut. Lionel Millard's Epilogue:

> Here was no apish comedy, no tale
> Such as by candlelight the arras shows
> To drunken masquers; but a player's life
> For all to hear. Sunned bones are dry
> But from them augurs have anatomised
> A breathing man. So have you seen
> The idiot nuptials; twenty moons of doubt;
> The tavern mummers who seduced this Will
> To learn their art . . .

William Bliss provided an effective piece of dramatic antithesis in his Paolo and Francesca (Webster).

> *Paolo*: She was too young to die . . . Those eyes! . . . those eyes! I cannot look. Art thou a man? How couldst——
> *Barnabo*: I did your bidding. Fifty gold bezants you said.

John Crow's Ur-Hamlet had the colourful enthusiasm of the early Marlowe:

> Noumberles Argoses shal bringe mee golde,
> *Diamants*, *Æmerauldes* and *Crisoprace*.

There was an ingenuous if inconsequent charm about his opening:

> And what sayeth Ramus?
> *Esse, non esse? Quid sit melius?*
> Bidde *Ramus* packe. Amleth thou must aspire.
> Renowned *Hamleth*, Prorex of the VVorld,
> Fell scurge of Polackes and Suedonians,
> Slavonians, Almains, Rutters, Lappes and Muffes,
> Aspyres to weare the crowne of alle the worlde.

There were two Judases, one by Shakespeare. The monologue from "Judas Iscariot, a solemn Tragedy by Christopher Marlowe" (discovered by Basil Ashmore) had an authentic ring; although Marlowe, in our recollection, except for necromantic uses, kept his Bible at a polite distance. J. W. F. Hurford's gripping excerpt makes me wish to read more of his lost play.

And now the winners. First prize goes to Pibwob, whose fragment is graceful and sure, as well as "tantalising"; the second to John Cowper Powys for his exciting deathbed passage. I wish I could quote the entries of Robert Upcott and Basil Ashmore, who, with J. W. F. Hurford, lead the runners-up. Others highly commended are "Tahnit," William Bliss, Emily Frazer, and Guy Williams.

FIRST PRIZE.

(A FRAGMENT)

Paulus: After the Tempest, calm. Our Isle of Voices
Lacks his that lilted Master of us all.
The magic died when Prospero's book was closed.
Peto: You knew him, sir?
Paulus: Aye, as the channel knows
The main from which he draws his tides and tramplings,
Else stagnate marsh. I have writ, I loved the man
This side idolatry.
Peto: Tell me more of him.
Paulus: Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, Romeo, Lear,
Nay, even the scrambled borrowings and botchings
Distilled unblotted from his pen diffuse
His living essence. While our stage abides
And England breeds the players to unlock the doors
He will stand clear and free.
Peto: But, sir, the man,
Himself, his aspect, humours, turns of speech,
Unbuttoned moods and carriage?
Paulus: Thus he was.
I speak who knew and loved him. In his youth . . . ("PIBWOB")

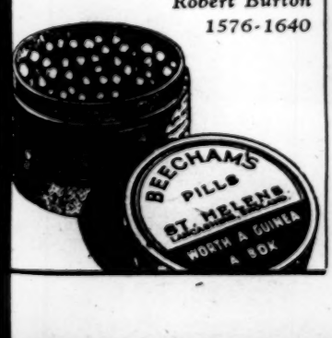
SECOND PRIZE.

Who's that? Is it Cecil? Clear the room, my lord!
Are we alone? Hush . . . stoop . . . I'm short of breath.
Closer . . . God's Wounds! Deem'st thou I stink already?
Lower, I say! Leicester would buss me dead
And rotten. While we've paps a man's beard tickles.
Who said the whore had such a little neck?
Who said stars fell all night at Fotheringay?
I'll not be carrion for their Austrian crows
And Spanish daws. Are we alone, old friend?
Then send for him! Hell's fire, man, send for him!
No, no! Not there! Under my head—the seal—
God's wounds! Lift up the pillow, man, and send it—
The goodyears rot them! She the only one
Can hide a cradle underneath a crown?
Horses and ships! He'll ride the free salt flood
And I shall sleep in peace in Westminster.

(JOHN COWPER POWYS)

Health is indeed a precious thing...

Robert Burton
1576-1640



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